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Ekeus expected in Baghdad Monday

BAGHDAD (AFP) — The head of the U.N. Special Commission on Disarmament in Iraq (UNSCOM) is expected to arrive in Baghdad Monday, a day later than planned because of "technical problems," the United Nations said Saturday. Rolf Ekeus's visit follows the U.N. Security Council's call Friday for Iraq to stop preventing U.N. experts from inspecting sites where they might find prohibited weapons. Mr. Ekeus "will arrive in Iraq Monday because of technical problems related to an aircraft which is to bring him from Bahrain to Baghdad," an UNSCOM source told AFP in Baghdad. Mr. Ekeus is to stay in Baghdad until Wednesday and meet high-level Iraqi officials, including Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz. His mission is part of an UNSCOM-Iraq agreement concluded in June under which Mr. Ekeus returns to Baghdad every two months.

Oman mediating Gulf dispute

MANAMA (AP) — Oman has embarked on a mediation effort to resolve a long-standing territorial dispute between Bahrain and Qatar. Foreign Minister Yousef Ben Alawi said Friday his country was eager to improve relations between Bahrain and Qatar in an effort to strengthen the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) to which the three nations belong. The six-member alliance also groups Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. Oman currently holds the GCC's rotaring presidency. "We are working to establish a formula that is good not only for the two states, but one that serves all relations among Gulf Cooperation Council countries," the official Oman News Agency quoted Mr. Ben Alawi as saying. He said "political differences" between Bahrain and Qatar had sharpened, but that both countries still wanted to resolve their dispute peacefully.

King: Jordan is entering a new era

No going back on democracy; attempts to tamper with security and stability will not be tolerated

Muasher says there is evidence that 'some official parties in Iraq' were behind the disturbances in south

By Sa'eda Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein said Saturday Jordan was entering a new era but there could be no backing from democracy and that any attempt to tamper with the Kingdom's security and stability would not be tolerated.

The King, speaking to reporters after chairing a Cabinet session that reviewed the situation in the country after the riots, was asked whether Iraq was involved in the riots.

"Your imagination is not far from the truth," the King replied. "We have evidence derived from investigations."

Shortly after the King spoke, Information Minister Marwan Muasher said "there is proof of the involvement of some official Iraqi parties" in the riots.

The King told reporters that "all these questions will be investigated by justice...."

"There are some people who have been misled and were not fully aware of what happened," he said. "They will be dealt with separately. They may have learned a lesson from these events. But the others, plotters and instigators, will be referred to court."

The King said the unrest targetted the democratic process of the Kingdom and vowed to deal sternly with any attempt to tamper with public or the private property or the security and stability of the country.

"We have all hopes in the future," he said. "I believe the coming stage will be a new start that is void of troubles and where there will be more (nation)-building."

The King said calm had been restored throughout the Kingdom.

Dr. Muasher said 32 from among those held after the riots were released by Saturday afternoon and that those who did not take part in the riots and violence would also be released during this week.

He said those who were found to have been directly involved in the riots and violence or in instigating the unrest would be referred to the State Security Court for trial.

Answering questions, Dr. Muasher confirmed that diplomatic action was being taken against Iraq, but declined to give details except that the charge d'affaires at the Iraqi embassy was summoned to the Foreign Ministry (see separate story).

Asked on whether the government intends to outlaw any political party, the pro-Iraq Arab Socialist Baath Party in particular, Dr. Muasher said "appropriate measures" would be taken after the court issues its ruling in all cases.

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King to visit Bahrain soon

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein said Saturday he planned to visit Bahrain as soon as the Emir of Bahrain returns home after a trip abroad. He said he would also visit other Gulf countries and expressed confidence that Jordanian-Kuwaiti relations would return to normal soon.

His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday chairs a session of the Council of Ministers (photo by Yousef Allan)

Army quits Karak; curfew lifted

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Authorities on Saturday withdrew the army from Karak and lifted a curfew imposed on the southern town following two days of riots there and in other towns in the south in protest against the increase in the prices of bread and fodder.

Army soldiers moved away from the town along with their armoured personnel carriers and equipment, residents reached by the phone said.

They also said police maintained a presence in the key roads leading to Karak but were not present in strength within the town.

"The curfew has been completely lifted because total calm now prevails in the town," Karak Governor Badereddin Al Wadyan told the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The governor also told Petra that the army had been withdrawn from the town and that 30 from among those detained following the riots were released.

Other detainees who did not take part in the riots although they participated in demonstrations after Friday prayers on Aug. 16 are expected to be released gradually, security sources said.

"Those found to have taken direct part in the violence and sabotage against public and private property will be sent to court," said a security source.

Security sources have said that unsigned leaflets were distributed in Karak on Aug. 15 urging people to take to the streets to protest the increase in the prices of bread and fodder. It was not immediately known whether investigations had established the origin of the leaflets.

The curfew was imposed on Karak on Aug. 17, after town residents staged violent demonstrations, clashed with police and attacked government buildings and private property for two days running. On Sunday, the army was deployed.

No incidents were reported since Saturday in Karak or any of the other trouble-hit southern towns, including Tafileh, Ma'an, Muta, Moab and Al Mazar.

Unofficial estimates put the damage caused in Karak at JD4 million.

Apart from slight injuries suffered by both protesters and security men, no casualties were reported from the riots. Security forces said they were under strict orders not to use live ammunition and restrict their anti-riot measures to tear-gas and rubber bullets.

The curfew was completely lifted and the army withdrawn from Karak

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Government asks senior Iraqi 'diplomat' to leave, reviews status of others

By P.V.Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan on Saturday asked a senior diplomat at the Iraqi embassy to leave the country and to shorten the term of the press attache at the mission for their alleged involvement in intelligence activities, informed sources said.

The expulsion notice was the firmest diplomatic action that Jordan has taken against Iraq following "clear indications" that the Iraqi government had instigated last week's riots in southern Jordan (see separate story), the sources noted.

The sources said that the chief of protocol at the Foreign Ministry, Ahmad Al Hassan, summoned the Iraqi charge d'affaires, Hikmat Abdul Razak Al Hajou, who holds the rank of minister plenipotentiary, and conveyed the demand to him.

"The government asked that Khaled Rashid Musleh, a first secretary at the Iraqi embassy who arrived here recently, leave the Kingdom because the Foreign Ministry has rejected his nomination for accreditation," said one source, who did not want to be identified. "Mr. Musleh has been given three days to leave the Kingdom."

According to the source, the Jordanian authorities have information that Mr. Musleh "is an Iraqi intelligence officer."

Earlier reports had said Mr. Musleh was banned from entering Jordan from Iraq when he arrived to take office. The source corrected that report and said Mr. Musleh was at the Iraqi mission and the embassy had filed a nomination for his accreditation as a diplomat in Jordan.

The source said that Mr. Hassan also informed Mr. Hajou, who is head of the mission in the absence of Ambassador Nouri Al Weis, the government would like to see that Adel Ibrahim, press attache at the embassy, leave Jordan "as soon as possible."

Independent sources said Mr. Ibrahim's term of office was about to end. The Jordanian government would not mind if he stayed for "one or two weeks" but "not a few months."

Earlier, sources had indicated that Mr. Ibrahim, who took office here in December 1992, had already been served notice to leave on grounds of "activities incompatible with his diplomatic status" — a euphemism for intelligence gathering or spying activities.

"In general, Jordan wants to reduce the number of diplomats at the Iraqi embassy," said another source. There are more than 20 Iraqi diplomats accredited to Jordan while the number of Jordanian diplomats in Baghdad is only three, including Ambassador Bassam Qaqish.

Also discussed during Saturday's meeting at the Foreign Ministry was the

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Some detainees freed; party members held

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — As authorities on Saturday continued releasing some of those arrested in connection with last week's disturbances in the south, at least two political parties said some of their leaders and members continued to be arrested.

With the reports of releases and arrests, it was not immediately possible to determine how many remained in detention. Officials said early last week that 150 people were arrested, but then raised the number to 190.

On Wednesday and Thursday, authorities released an unknown number of people after questioning them and determining that they were not involved in the attacks against government buildings and banks in Karak and other towns of south, security sources said.

They said only those found to have directly taken part in the acts of violence would remain in jail pending legal proceedings.

Badreddin Al Wadyan, governor of Karak, the southern town which was hit by two days of rioting last week, told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, on Saturday that security forces had released 30 people held after the riots.

Among those who were still held on Saturday were at least 10 members and supporters of the pro-Iraq Jordan Arab Socialist Baath Party, nine supporters and members of the Jordanian Communist Party, 14 members of the the Jordan People's Democratic Party, 13 members of the Jordan People's Unity Party and the leader of the Ansar party, according to party statements received by the Jordan Times.

Also remaining in detention were Nayaf Tawara, publisher of the Al Bilad weekly, who was arrested by police last week, Al Aswaq journalist Fuad Hussein and Al Ahali weekly chief editor Osama Rantissi.

Al Ahali is the mouthpiece of the Jordan People's Democratic Party, an offshoot of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP).

On Saturday, the Jordan People's Unity Party said 13 of its members were

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Japanese foreign minister arrives for talks on peace process, bilateral relations

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihik Ikeda arrived in Amman on Saturday on a 24-hour visit aimed at discussing the stalled Middle East peace process and Jordanian-Japanese ties.

Mr. Ikeda, the most senior representative of the government of Rytaro Hashimoto to visit Jordan, will hold talks with His Majesty King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti today before leaving for Gaza and Israel.

During his visit, Mr. Ikeda is also expected to sign an agreement under which Tokyo would give Jordan $7 million to rebuild the Sheikh Hussein Bridge and access roads and terminal facilities at the northern crossing point between Jordan and Israel.

Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Takyuki Kimura said the visit of the minister had two main objectives: Discussing the status of the Middle East peace process and means to boost Jordanian-Japanese relations.

Mr. Ikeda is expected to voice Tokyo's concern over the course of the peace process after the election of right-winger Benyamin Netanyahu as prime minister of Israel in May and urge continued Jordanian efforts to reinvigorate the Arab-Israeli peace negotiations, Ambassador Kimura said.

On the bilateral front, Mr. Ikeda will also review with Mr. Kabariti the outcome of discussions on Japanese assistance for several projects in human resources development and water supply. No definite announcements are expected in this context. Officials said the topics were being discussed at experts level before finalisation.

No official talks were scheduled for Mr. Ikeda in Amman Saturday night. Mr. Ikeda was the guest of honour at a dinner hosted by Ambassador Kimura and attended by the Japanese community living in Jordan.

Mr. Ikeda, who arrived by road from Damascus after talks there with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad (see story on page 12), visited the ancient Greco-Roman city of Jerash on his way to Amman. He was received upon arrival at the Ramtha border post by Foreign Ministry Chief of Protocol Ahmad Al Hassan.

The official spokesman for Mr. Ikeda is expected to brief the press around Sunday noon after the foreign minister's talks with Prime Minister Kabariti.

PLO says peace talks will resume before Sept. 2

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — The Palestinian minister who will lead the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) team to peace talks with Israel sid on Saturday that Israel had informed President Yasser Arafat that it wanted to begin the negotiations before Sept. 2.

"The Israelis have informed President Arafat that talks between the commitees will start before Sep. 2, but they did not set a firm date," Local Government Minister Saeb Erekat told Reuters. Mr. Erekat will head the PLO team to the talks.

Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu's spokesman Shai Bazak told Reuters: "It will start soon...We are not yet announcing a date."

On Thursday, Mr. Netanyahu, elected on May 29, telephoned Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to tell him that peace talks with the PLO last held before the Israeli poll would resume "in the very near future."

Mr. Netanyahu was apparently shaken by Mr. Mubarak's suggestion earlier on Thursday that he might cancel a Middle East economic summit in November over Israel's stalling peace moves.

One PLO official, speaking on condition he not be named, said on Saturday that Israel was anxious to have the talks going before a meeting of international donors who have pledged support for the peace process.

"Israel wants the talks to start before the Sep. 5 international donors meeting so they will ease pressure on them over freezing the peace talks and to show the donors it is committed to the peace process," the PLO official said.

There is still no Israeli announcement of a date for a long-delayed troop redeployment in the West Bank town of Hebron. The PLO regards the redeployment, to which Israel's previous government committed itself in an accord signed with the PLO last September, as a test of Mr. Netanyahu's peace intentions.

Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai recently presented a revised redeployment plan to Mr. Netanyahu.

Israel's cabinet statement on Friday quoted Mr. Netanyahu, who wants to renegotiate the Hebron deal at the peace talks, as saying no new redeployment agreement would be signed without first being presented to the entire government.

Israel has said it would not implement the Hebron plan until the Palestinian National Authority closed its offices in Arab East Jerusalem. Palestinians have rejected the condition as well as Israel's intention to renegotiate the Hebron deal.

Aside from issues like Hebron hanging over from interim peace deals signed by Israel's previous government, the Palestinians and Israeli still have to negotiate a final peace.

Final status issues include borders, refugees, Jerusalem, Jewish settlements, and the nature of the Palestinian entity. Mr. Netanyahu has said interim issues should be settled before moving to final status matters.

The PNA, meanwhile freed a West Bank Hamas Islamic group leader it had detained for almost six months at Israel's demand.

Palestinians said on Saturday that Sheikh Hassan Yousef was released from jail in the Ramallah self-rule enclave on Friday.

Mr. Yousef, reached at home in Ramallah on Saturday, told Reuters: "I was released yesterday at noon. There were no conditions for my release. There were no charges against me from the beginning."

Mr. Yousef, a Hamas leader in the Ramallah area, was rounded up with about 900 Islamists after Hamas and Islamic Jihad suicide bombers killed 59 people in Israel in four attacks in February and March.

Israel and the United States put pressure on Mr. Arafat to crack down on militant groups after the attacks.

Taleban vow to push drive for Islamic rule

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Afghanistan's powerful Taleban militia force has vowed it would not enter into any negotiations with Kabul and would pursue its goal to set up a truly Islamic government in the country.

"We will defeat all internal and external conspiracies to weaken us and thwart our march toward supremacy of Islamic values in Afghanistan," an important Taleban leader, Amir Khan Muttaqi, said in an interview.

Mr. Muttaqi, speaking to AFP in the southwestern Pakistani city of Quetta on Friday, dismissed recent Kabul overtures for negotiations as propaganda aimed at creating division in the militia.

He said the reported accord between Kabul rulers and northern warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum to reopen the Salang Highway and other such moves would not bring peace to the war-torn country.

"Peace and order will return to Afghanistan only under an Islamic Taleban government," said Mr. Mutaqqi, head of the information wing of the militia at their base in Kandahar near the Pakistan border.

Mr. Muttaqi alleged that some foreign countries were apprehensive and did not want Taleban control in Afghanistan. He pointedly blamed Iran, Russia and India in this connection, without elaborating.

Since emerging from Koranic schools in November 1994, the militia of mainly ethnic Pushtun people has established its sway over half of the country. It has been besieging Kabul for about nine months to topple President Burhanuddin Rabbani.

The Taleban hardline stance is considered in Afghan and diplomatic circles a major sticking point, amid U.N. mediation efforts led by its new special envoy Robert Holl and a momentum for peace generated by recent Kabul government expansion and its talks with General Dostum.

The militia is known to enjoy close relations with Pakistan, which says it is neutral and extends support to U.N. efforts and formation of a broadbased consensus government in Kabul through negotiations among all factions.

Fighting has been reported from eastern Paktia province in the past two weeks, although Kabul front-line have been quiet in recent weeks.

A Mujahedeen information service, Afghan Islamic Press (AIP), Saturday quoted unammed Taleban sources as saying the militia had siezed a major military centre of Afghan Premier Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami in Paktia the previous day.

Clashes in Paktia, a province near the Pakistan border, have been admitted by the Hezb-e-islami but their spokesman has said the Taleban were making exaggerted claims to shore up their "sagging" morale.

Meanwhile, a local newspaper, The News, said new differences had erupted in the Kabul coalition between Mr. Hekmatyar and President Rabbani's military strongman Ahmad Shah Masood.

Citing unidentified Afghan sources, it said the two camps were locked in a "subtle war" over a proposal by Mr. Hekmatyar's cabinet that the government expel former communists from the administration and ban their entry in future.

The report could not be independently confirmed, but informed sources in Kabul earlier this week spoke of an uneasiness over Hekmatyar-Dostum negotiations.

Former president says Tehran regime killed at least 60 foes

BERLIN (R) – Former Iranian President Abolhassan Ban-Sadr said on Friday at least 60 dissidents had been killed on the orders of the Iranian government in the last 15 years and warned there would be more bloodshed.

In an interview with Reuters at a secret location in Berlin on Friday evening, Mr. Bani-Sadr said the Tehran government would continue to liquidate political opponents inside and outside the country until Western states began to act with greater resolve.

"There were at least 60 people murdered by the regime since the coup against me," said Mr. Bani-Sadr, speaking in French and seated in a small two-room apartment crowded with more than a dozen heavily armed security guards.

"Yes, there will be more (assassinations) if the Western states do not act with resolve and with greater transparency against the regime," said the former president, who has lived in exile in Paris since his ouster in 1981.

He criticised the United States' approach to dealing with Iran, saying economic sanctions and military threats were counterproductive. But he also condemned the European stance "because everything is done too secretly."

Mr. Bani Sadr, 63, had just finished giving testimony for two days in a German court where five men are on trial for murdering four Iranian dissidents in a gangland-style shooting at a Berlin restaurant in 1992.

Saying he was satisfied with the German court's handling of the case and the questions he answered over the last two days, Mr. Bani Sadr appeared relaxed.

He told the court he had information from three independent sources that the 1992 execution of three Iranian Kurd leaders and their translator at the "Mykonos" restaurant was ordered by Iran's religious leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

He said the execution was also approved by Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Intelligence Minister Ali Fallahiyan. But in Tehran, Iran's top judge urged Germany to refuse to admit Mr. Bani-Sadr's testimony, to guard its judicial reputation and avoid politicising the trial

"What is the judicial validity of a ruling that would be based, even for a few hundredths of percent, on the testimony ofa deposed person who has fled this country?" Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi asked in a mass prayer sermon.

Abolhassan Bani-Sadr

German justice authorities issued an arrest warrant against Mr. Fallahiyan in March and federal prosecutor Bruno Jost said after hearing Mr. Bani-Sadr's testimony he would also examine the possibility of filing charges against Ayatollah Khamenei and Mr. Rafsanjani.

"Khamenei and Rafsanjani are the ones responsible for the murders," Mr. Bani-Sadr said.

The short, soft-spoken former president said he was eager to come to Berlin to testify because he is worried Germany has struck a deal with Iran to free the defendants ahead of time if they are convicted, an allegation that Bonn immediately rejected.

"I have proof of this," Mr. Bani-Sadr said. "I have to ask if (German Foreign Minister Klaus) Kinkel is the attorney of Rafsanjani."

Although mostly upbeat during the 45-minute interview, Mr. Bani-Sadr's trademark grin disappeared when recounting how he had delivered an advance warning to the murdered Iranian Kurd leaders in Germany about the threat of an attack.

"They were informed about the danger, but they did not take it seriously enough," he said. "They did not take any security precautions."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Kuwaiti daily threatened with bomb attack

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A Kuwaiti newspaper reported on Saturday that it had received three faxes threatening to bomb the newspaper if it criticised Arabs and Muslims rather than the "real enemy" Israel and its allies. None of the faxes received by the independent newspaper Al Watan were claimed by an identifiable group, although two of the faxes were signed "a mujahid." "To the editor and journalists ... the media should be directed at the real enemy, Israel and its allies, the pen should not be used as a weapon to divide Arabs and Muslims" said the first fax, published with the other two on the front page. The second fax said "the most important enemy is Israel and its allies from America" and accused the paper of being too afraid and cowardly to write anything about Israel and America. The third fax, which was unsigned, said simply "I will bomb your newspaper ... Al Watan." The faxes, which were sent on Friday evening, did not cite any reports recently published by Al Watan which may have prompted the threats. Al Watan is an independent newspaper owned by Sheikh Ali Al Khalifa Al Sabah, a member of the ruling family and former oil minister.

Prosecutor seeks stiff terms for pro-Kurds

ANKARA (AFP) — Ankara's state security prosecutor has called for prison sentences of over 20 years for 23 leaders of the pro-Kurdish People's Democracy Party (HADEP) accusing them of "setting up an armed gang," their lawyers said Saturday. The move follows a June 23 party congress where assailants desecrated a Turkish flag, causing a public uproar in the country. HADEP Chairman Murat Bozlak and over 40 leading members of the party were arrested immediately after the incident. Their lawyers said the state security prosecutor had also accused the party of being "a legal side organisation" of the outlawed Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), which has been waging a separatist war in southeastern Turkey since 1984. The prosecutor asked for prison terms of 22 years six months for Mr. Bozlak and 22 other party leaders, 15 years for another 17 party members and three years for a Kurdish ex-deputy.

Sweden asks Lebanon for extradition

BEIRUT (AFP) — Sweden has asked Lebanon to extradite a Palestinian who escaped from a prison in the Scandinavian country where he was serving a sentence for armed robbery and other crimes, a judicial source said Saturday. The request for Ali Suleiman's extradition was made during a visit to General Prosecutor Adnan Addum in Beirut by a delegation from the Swedish embassy in Syria late Friday, the source said. Suleiman was recently arrested in Lebanon in line with an Interpol arrest warrant. He escaped from prison in Sweden through Denmark by using a false name, "William Fauler." He was serving two prison sentences, one for six years and another for 20 years for taking part as a member of a gang in a series of armed robberies and other crimes in Sweden. The source said Suleiman, who carried Palestinian travel documents, claimed upon his arrest that he had obtained Lebanese nationality in 1994. Mr. Addum was studying the extradition request, the source said, taking into account that Lebanon and Sweden are not bound by an extradition treaty and usually deal with such matters on the basis of mutual treatment.

Treasure trove seized from Egyptian

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian police have arrested a wealthy businessman and seized a trove of treasures from ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome stashed away in a hotel suite he rented in Alexandria, a newspaper reported Saturday. Police described the Alexandria hotel room rented for the past seven years by Nadim Emile Zeidane as a veritable "museum," Al Wafd said. His collection included eight marble or stone statues from the time of the Pharoahs, (3,000 BC to 400 BC), eight Greco-Roman marble heads from between 300 BC and 300 AD and a number of Islamic ceramic items, it said. Coptic wooden icons of saints from between 580 and 639 AD, oil lamps and silver chests were also seized.

Exiled Yemenis' trial delayed

SANAA (AFP) — The trial of Yemeni separatists who fled country after losing the 1994 civil war has been postponed until Sept. 14, judicial sources said Saturday. Fifteen southern leaders now living in Britain and several Arab states were summoned for trial for Aug. 24, accused of high treason and violating the constitution. But a court statement obtained by AFP said the trial had been put back for the fifth time to Sept. 14 because of the holding of a "judicial congress" between Aug. 20 and 25. The accused include former Yemen Socialist Party leader Ali Salem Al Beid, who took refuge in neighbouring Oman after losing his bid for secession of South Yemen after the May-July civil war in 1994.

Gulf papers support Mubarak's stand over economic summit

DUBAI (AFP) — The Gulf press on Saturday praised Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak for threatening to scrap a Middle East economic conference if Israel does not honour peace process commitments.

"President Mubarak is speaking the thoughts of all Arabs, as it is impossible to hold a world economic conference in Cairo while Israel persists in impeding the peace process," said the Al Ittihad daily in the United Arab Emirates.

"The stance of President Mubarak is clear ... the whole world has given (Israeli Prime Minister Benyamin) Netanyahu enough respite and can wait no longer," added the paper, which reflects the official viewpoint.

Mr. Mubarak said on Thursday that in spite of Israeli declarations of respect for the agreed-on principles of the peace process, "no progress has been made on the ground."

"I call on Israel to make progress, or there will be no sense in holding the economic conference," scheduled for November 12-14, he added in a televised speech to university students.

The Saudi daily Al Madina said the Israeli government "wants to have its cake and eat it too.

"Israel wants to enjoy the economic fruits of peace by taking part in this conference ... without planting a single seed for peace or watering a single tree for peace, and that is impossible," said the paper.

The Qatari daily Al Watan said "the lack of enthusiasm and negligence of the United States with regard to the peace process have created a feeling of betrayal among Arabs ... which has led President Mubarak to threaten to cancel the economic conference."

The paper called on the United States to "play the true role of sponsor and partner" in the peace process.

Since Mr. Netanyahu took office in June, he has repeatedly said he will pursue peace with Arab neighbours and respect accords already signed, but he has yet to take any concrete steps.

He has also ruled out the principle of trading occupied Arab land in return for peace, regarded by Arab countries as the bedrock of the peace process.

The two previous economic development conferences for the Middle East and North Africa, which Israel and most Arab states attended, were held in Casablanca, Morocco, in 1994 and in Amman in 1995.

7 killed in Algerian blast — report

ALGIERS (AFP) – A bomb blast in a market at Bou Haroun in western Algeria killed seven people and injured several others, the weekly Al Watan reported here Saturday.

A statement released by the Algerian security services put the death toll in Friday's explosion at five, with five injured.

The bomb went off in a weekly open-air market, the paper said. The victims were identified as a woman and her 25-year-old daughter, another young woman and four boys, whose ages were not given.

Four other bombs were defused in the area in a follow-up operation by the security services, reported another newspaper, Liberte, adding that a man was killed by a bomb he was transporting in the neighbouring locality of Bou Ismail. A father and son were found with their throats cut on Tuesday in Chihani, near Al Tarf in the southeast of the country after being kidnapped earlier by an armed group, the Le Matin newspaper reported.

Militants have been waging a four-year campaign to overthrow the secular government, after it annulled a 1992 general election won by the main Islamic party, the now-banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS).

Sudan troops alert against 'incursions from Eritrea'

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — A governor in eastern Sudan was quoted Saturday as saying security forces were on alert to counter further incursions by rebels from Eritrea.

Abdul Qasem Mohammad Ibrahim, the governor of Kassala state, told the government daily Al Engaz Al Watani that the alert was necessary "to face any threats that might befall the homeland."

Sudan has repeatedly accused Eritrea of supporting Sudanese rebel groups and allowing its territory to be used as a launching pad for attacks into Sudan. Eritrea severed diplomatic relations with Khartoum two years ago after accusing it of supporting anti-government fighters.

Sudanese authorities last week announced the arrest of 19 military officers and civilians in the Port Sudan area and accused them of plotting assassinations and attacks on vital installations.

The move was reported to be part of a plan to occupy a number of cities in the east to cut the heartland off from its main sea outlets.

Sheikh Hassan Tourabi, Sudan's leading Islamic figure and speaker of parliament, has accused Eritrea and Uganda of being behind the recent Port Sudan incident "with the assistance of some traitors."

Sheikh Tourabi is widely believed to be the power behind the government of Omar Al Bashir, who took power in a 1989 military coup. He was elected president earlier this year in balloting that was boycotted by the opposition.

Smugglers arrested

Sudanese police have arrested three people trying to smuggle sewing machines and army clothing to Sudanese opposition groups in Eritrea, Al Engaz Al Watani said in a separate report on Saturday. It said the smugglers were caught in Banat in Kassala, on the border with Eritrea, and had confessed they were on their way to "the so-called alliance forces which have been undertaking subversive operations on the eastern border." Authorities in Kassala said opposition forces based in Eritrea have been laying landmines and stealing vehicles and other goods to smuggle them across the border into Eritrea.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

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PROGRAMME TWO

15:05 ..... Cartoon — The Mask
15:25 ..... Mac and Matley
16:00 ..... Italian Soccer
17:00 ..... News Flash
17:02 ..... Science Cartoon
17:15 ..... La Vie Devant Moi
17:30 ... Game Show — Pyramide
18:00 Magazine — La Marche Du Siecle/Part One
19:00 ..... Le Journal
19:15 Magazine — Sports Et Musique
19:30 ..... News Headlines
19:35 ... Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
20:00 ..... American Chart Show
20:45 The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air
21:10 ..... Black's Magic
22:00 ..... News in English
22:25 ..... Frenchie
23:30 ..... Short Story Cinema — "Partners"
23:59 ..... Nelson's Column

PRAYER TIMES

04:39 ..... Fajr
06:01 ..... (Sunrise) Duha
12:38 ..... Dhuhr
16:16 ..... 'Asr
19:15 ..... Maghreb
20:37 ..... 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifieh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunication Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
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Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295 English-speaking
Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Relative hot weather conditions will prevail with temperatures above average by 2-3 degrees centigrade and winds northwesterly moderate. On Monday, temperatures are expected to drop becoming around average. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman	22/34
Aqaba	26/39
Deserts	18/38
Jordan Valley	24/39

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 33, Aqaba 37 Humidity readings: Amman 25 per cent, Aqaba 48 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Abbas Al Hakim 885446
Dr. Arafat Al Ashhab 602507
Dr. Jamal Jbarah 847351
Dr. Ayman Al Muhtasib 875748
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Ta'amneh 250080
Al Quds pharmacy ..... (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Yousef Abu Sa'd 989000
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre	637111
Civil Defence Department	661111
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Rescue Police	192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade	617101
Blood Bank	775121
Highway Police	843402
Traffic Police	896390
Public Security Dept.	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800
Price Complaints	661176
Water & Sewerage Complains	897467
Amman Municipality Complaints	787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)	121
Overseas Calls	010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs	623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radio Jordan	774111
Water Authority	680100
J. Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power Co.	636381
RJ Flight Information	08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport	08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity 644281/6
Akileh Maternity 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital ..... (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital ..... (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital ..... (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital ..... (09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital ..... (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital ..... (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital ..... (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52700)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

09:30 ..... Jeddah (RJ)
09:55 ..... Larnaca (RJ)
10:05 ..... Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:10 ..... Dubai, Abu Dubai (RJ)
10:20 ..... Beirut (RJ)
10:50 ..... Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
16:05 ..... New York (RJ)
16:55 ... Amsterdam, Brussels (RJ)
18:00 ..... Paris (RJ)
18:25 ... Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:35 ..... Rome (add) (RJ)
20:25 ..... Rome (RJ)
20:30 ..... Tunis (RJ)
20:40 ..... Vienna (RJ)
01:10 ..... Cairo (RJ)
05:30 ..... Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

06:30 ..... Tel Aviv (LY)
12:30 ..... Doha (Q7)
13:40 ..... Bahrain (GF)
15:05 ..... Moscow (SU)
16:30 ..... Dubai (EK)
20:35 ..... Cairo (MS)
21:10 ..... Beirut (ME)
22:15 ..... London, Beirut (BA)
23:20 ..... Istanbul (TK)
23:30 ..... Athens (OA)
01:20 ..... Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)
02:30 ..... Belgrade (GU)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

09:50 ..... Aqaba (RW)
19:45 ..... Tel Aviv (RW)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

06:10 ..... Madrid (RJ)
06:35 ..... Beirut (RJ)
09:30 ..... Frankfurt (RJ)
10:00 ..... Rome (add) (RJ)
12:00 ..... Vienna (RJ)
12:00 ..... Tunis (RJ)
12:15 ..... Rome (RJ)
12:15 ..... Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
12:30 ..... Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:20 ..... Athens (RJ)
13:25 ..... London (RJ)
19:20 Dubai, Bangkok, Fukuoka (add) (RJ)
21:10 ..... Cairo (RJ)
21:20 ..... New Delhi (RJ)
21:20 ..... Jeddah (RJ)
21:45 ..... Damascus (RJ)
22:10 ..... Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)
22:35 ..... Dubai (RJ)
22:45 ..... Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
22:50 ..... Doha, Bangkok (RJ)
23:45 ..... Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights

06:40 ..... London (KJ)
07:25 ..... Tel Aviv (LY)
08:45 ..... Beirut (ME)
09:15 ..... London (BA)
12:00 ..... Sanaa (IY)
14:30 ..... Doha (GF)
16:05 ..... Moscow (SU)
21:25 ..... Cairo (MS)
02:30 ..... Amsterdam (KL)
03:30 ..... Belgrade (GU)
04:00 ..... Athens (OA)
06:00 ..... Istanbul (TK)
07:45 ..... Beirut, London (BA)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

10:00 Amman (arriving at Marka Airport from QAIA) (RW)
20:30 ..... Aqaba (RW)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman ..... 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus ..... 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus ..... 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman ..... 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple	700/500
Banana	600/600
Banana (mukhammar)	520/520
Banana (imported)	850/600
Carrot	160/90
Cauliflower	400/250
Cucumber (large)	240/140
Cucumber (small)	420/250
Eggplant	220/150
Fig	340/240
Garlic	650/400
Grapes	400/250
Lemon	520/400
Marrow (large)	250/150
Marrow (small)	450/300
Mulukhiah	110/70
Onion (dry)	150/90
Okra	800/500
Pea	580/400
Peach	850/600
Pepper (hot)	340/200
Pepper (sweet)	460/260
Potato	350/200
String Bean	850/600
Sweet melon	350/200
Tomato	130/80
Water melon	200/140

Ministry proposes food monitoring institute

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Health completed preparation of a draft law on the establishment of a national food institution to monitor imported and domestically produced food products, Minister of Health Aref Bataineh announced Saturday.

According to the minister, such an institution is essential in order to ensure that food products conform to national safety standards.

The Ministry of Health joined specialists from various universities and professional associations in conjunction with international institutions to prepare the draft law.

Dr. Bataineh confirmed that the chambers of commerce and industry and the Jordanian Society of Food Importers were also consulted in preparing the draft law.

The draft law will be referred to Parliament for approval, and the minister said that the proposed institution will have partial independence and that the incumbent health minister will serve as chairman of the board of directors.

Responding to a question as to how food production in the Kingdom is currently supervised, Dr. Bataineh said the Ministry of Health monitors the processing of domestically produced food and conducts regular medical examinations on food industry employees.

Concerning comestibles, he added, the ministry tests samples of various imported commodities before introducing them into local commerce.

Dr. Bataineh further explained that the ministry conducts tests on domestic and imported medicines before authorising their sale.

The minister then cited approximately 81 per cent of the public is covered by public medical services or private health insurance and that the ministry is striving to expand health services to include temporary workers, agricultural labourers, and other members of the public who do not currently benefit from any health plan.

Dr. Bataineh said that Al Bashir Hospital, which served for decades as the sole government hospital in Amman, suffers from a case overload despite staff shifts around the clock.

He said that the ministry is now planning to build the Prince Hamzeh Hospital on the outskirts of Amman and has consulted with the Prime Minister and a number of international organisations regarding its construction.

The minister also said that next month the Ministry of Health will provide one ambulance to each of 15 health centres and hospitals.

Dr. Bataineh has been involved since last March in constructing a special centre at Tabarbour near Amman to treat toxic dependants.

He said that the 50-bed centre will undergo construction on 125 dunums of land and is expected to cost JD 1.45 million.

The centre has an estimated timetable of 18 months to completion.

TCC looks into lowering rates

By Christina Schlegl
Special to Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) is looking into the feasibility of lowering its rates for local and international calls.

Walid Dweik, Director-General of the TCC told the Jordan Times Saturday that the corporation is working on such a study but that a final decision to reduce charges must "be confirmed by the Cabinet."

Upon the study's completion, which is scheduled to be finished in the coming weeks, according to Mr. Dweik, it will be handed over directly to the Cabinet for a prompt decision, as the corporation would plan to put the proposed rates into effect on Oct. 1, 1996.

The TCC's suggestion to lower its fees comes as a reaction to the fierce competition in the telecommunications market.

"Being threatened by the so-called 'call-back'-system, which is offered illegally by foreign companies, we are forced to decrease our tariffs in order to compete," Mr. Dweik added.

Using a 'call-back' service one has to pay a predetermined amount in advance and secure a card with a code number. The customer then calls a number in the United States and is connected through an operator to the requested destination number abroad.

As the rates for such calls are by far lower than those charged by the TCC, the state-owned corporation tried to stop those practices in December last year by blocking access from Jordan to all numbers starting with 88 in North America. But its blocking attempts were incomplete.

Jordan-Syria Land Transport Company records profit of JD1.9m in 1995

AMMAN (Petra)— The Director-General of the Jordan-Syria Land Transport Company (JSLTC) Hamdi Habashneh Saturday announced that the company realised a net gain of JD1.9 million in profits in 1995 from operations of its truck fleet and yet put forth a series of suggestions to improve production in the coming years.

In a conference at company headquarters in Amman, attended by Minister of Transportation Naser Lawzi, Mr. Habashneh proposed that internal regulations be reexamined and modernised and that new trucks be purchased to boost the company's transportation capacity.

Fifty new trucks will be added to the company's 362 truck fleet and the plans are being implemented in conformity with that of an annual blueprint set by the company's board of directors, Mr. Habashneh explained.

He further explicated that the majority of the company's work is in transportation of cement from Jordan to Syria and cereals from Syria to Jordan, adding that there are 740 employees from the two countries.

The company, which was established in 1975, conducts workshops in Jordan and Syria, carries out plans for the manufacture of trailers for the trucks that the load capacity might be augmented, and has established a large area in Al Qastal south of Amman designated as a parking lot for the company's trucks.

Mr. Lawzi inspected the company programmes and workshops and was informed that the 90 trailers were built by local workers last year.

Minister of Transportation Naser Lawzi tours the Jordan-Syria Land Transport Company (JSLTC) (Petra photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

University acceptances to be released

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy President of University of Jordan Walid Ma'ani Monday will present the lists of students who have been accepted to the country's state universities for the new academic year 1996-1997 at a press conference at the Registration Department of the University of Jordan.

Ministry appoints new teachers

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Education Saturday announced the names of 1,217 newly appointed teachers who will work at ministry schools throughout the Kingdom. The new teachers have been selected to teach various subjects including: Islamic religion, Arabic , English, mathematcs, general science, physics, chemistry, biology, history, education, geometry, computer science, music, geography and arts.

ACC to accept credit applications

AMMAN (Petra) — The Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) Saturday asked all its branches in the Kingdom to accept credit applications, according to ACC Director General Mohammad Arabiyat. Mr. Arabiyat said applicants for ACC loans should be unemployed, have no private business, and qualify as low-income. The ACC, he said, will finance cattle breeding, bee-keeping, poultry, and field agriculture projects.

JIEC plans to build new industrial estates

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) Saturday announced that it has begun the second stage of an expansion project scheduled to end in 2000 with the aim of purchasing lands to establish additional industrial estates.

A total of JD 1.641 million has already been allotted for the purchase of land in Aqaba, Karak and Salt.

JIEC Director General Asem Hindawi stated that plans are to acquire 2,000 dunums from the Aqaba Region Authority at the cost of JD400,000, in Karak a 1,856-dunum plot has been purchased at the cost of JD281,283 and 50 dunums has been bought in Salt at the cost of JD 142,000, all dedicated to the establishment of like industrial estates.

Mr. Hindawi spoke of JIEC plans to purchase more land for other industrial estates slated for construction in Mafraq, Tafileh, Jerash, Zarqa and Ajloun to accommodate additional factories and businesses.

He said the JIEC is further planning to expand Al Hassan Industrial City which was built in 1991 and will purchase neighbouring property estimated at 500 dunums for that purpose.

This will effectively double its present area, a necessary action as all the buildings in the city are currently occupied, Mr. Hindawi elucidated.

He said that the Sahab Industrial Estate near Amman, established in the late 70s, has run out of space and therefore JIEC plans are under way for buying 128 dunums of adjacent land.

According to Mr. Hindawi, a minimum of JD58 million will be needed between 1996 and 2000 to establish an appropriate infrastructure including electricity, plumbing, telephone installation, and sewer systems and to construct facilities to house factories.

He said that the JIEC board resolved to establish a permanent exhibition at the Sahab Industrial Estate to display samples of manufactured goods as well as set up a central laboratory to serve the needs of the various enterprises located therein.

Celebrating the ordinary: experiments with space, time and people

By Mahmoud I. Mufti
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Dr. Hani Hourani's pictures do not attempt to dramatise the dreary, but to celebrate the ordinary. Whereas most photographers would be content to limit themselves to either colour or black and white photography — talent being a limiting factor — Dr. Hourani tackles both disciplines with incredible sensitivity to the potential and to the limitations of each. Invariably some are more evocative than others, in both categories, but none can be said to be bland. In fact, this artist approaches the subject matter in a manner of artistic intimacy which is immediately communicated to the viewer, imparting the sense, allegorically speaking, that these are 'hand-made' photographs rather than 'machine-rolled', much in the same way as a master craftsman patiently applies his skill to perfect his violin. It may be his hundredth, but it is crafted with the same loving meticulous care as his first.

Similarly, Dr. Hourani's success in his exhibited photos — also numerous — lies not in the way he addresses the many variables of credible photography, such as light, focus, etc., but in the way his photographs are infused with a sense of history and documentary prowess. He achieves this by not only choosing interesting subject matter, but also by interestingly choosing his angle of shooting, the time of day, and even the non-pinnable notion of "mood." Because this is exceedingly hard to achieve at any level, some of his works speak out to the viewer more vividly, even passionately, than others.

And as if the challenge of understanding and harnessing the subtleties of both black and white and colour format is not amply insurmountable, the artist takes on the additional challenge of diversifying his choice of subject-matter into three major areas: People going about their daily lives, urban architecture, and landscapes (each of which can engage a photographer for an entire lifetime).

The effect of all this diversity is dazzling. In planning to visit this exhibit, and if you are a reflective, historically sentimental person, dedicate at least an entire hour for this visual and documentary feast. One needs at least that long to be guided, by means of the works' powerful evocations, through the hilltops and characterful streets of Amman and Salt, to the even tighter, rustic, cobbled alleyways of Jerusalem and its plethora of minarets and church-spires. Beirut comes next, with some aerial depictions of the coastal bays in the fog. We are later corrected and told that these are taken from atop the Carlton Hotel, and not from the air.

"There appears to be a comeback in our culture towards viewing society holistically. In the old days, there was a much greater incidence of people delving into academia, the sciences, poetry, music, and the arts."

The splendourously ornate North African cities of Cairo, Marakesh and Tunis occupy a major section in the exhibit, almost comprising a treatise on (the study of) minarets, mosque facades, more minarets, archways, busy market places, and impoverished residential neighbourhoods. Istanbul and other regions of Turkey follow, with shots of old villages made entirely of timber, as well as others depicting luscious gardens (including various shots of an artist's back garden ... collaged walls and all).

Many of the works here make the viewer feel as if he/she would really like to be there. The coffee shop at Kan Zaman, for instance, is one such place: The sun, filtering through the loosely-woven reed ceiling of the enclosure, creates an elaborate embroidery of shades and shadows on the rough stone floor, mirroring the fibrous matrix above. The atmosphere is one of a tranquil spring morning, well before the arrival of the first luncheon-sniffers. Only several waiters in the extreme horizon of the walled cafe are apparent. But in one corner, one is able to discern a stack of "argeelehs" (one-metre-high traditional Arab-Turkish water pipes). In the diffused sun, and with the protective wind-blocker metal caps atop each one, they altogether look like small Roman Legionaries with spit-polished pewter helmets.

However, it is the photographs which combine both people and their urban settings, in this writer's opinion, that are most vividly able to touch the viewer. Two pictures hung horizontally next to each other recount one of the most typical tales of urban life; the "argeeleh ritual." Wafting in the smoke of the argeeleh's "tumbac," (a pungent blend of), three young men sit back and relax in an outdoor frescoed corner of a Damascus cafe on a Friday morning before noon prayers. The atmosphere is overwhelmingly one of total equilibrium with the physical surroundings; a metal-grated window and palm trees and a mosque painted on the wall just behind them, (hence the allusion to the frescoes).

While there is an assumed sense of camaraderie among argeeleh-smokers gathered together, the characters in the photograph seem content to just sit there and contemplate life, (though one of them looks as if he is truly better off not contemplating his own life). Details aside, however, what Dr. Hourani has achieved in this shot (and others involving people in urban street settings), is to capture a particular genre of mood; one that is far from contrived. It is a mood that enables one to see how true these characters are to themselves and to feel that the scenario is not one where these people simply "fit" and "fade away" into the background. Rather, it is a case where they are the principal players in the frame; the artistic reference point; the aesthetic anchor. Accordingly, the background finds itself in need to "keep up", as it were, with the atmosphere of authenticity generated by the characters.

Commenting on what most viewers and fellow photographers would most likely describe as an "over-thematic" approach to a photography exhibition, the artist says: "There appears to be a comeback in our culture towards viewing society holistically. In the old days, there was a much greater incidence of people delving into academia, the sciences, poetry, music, and the arts. This has the advantage — providing the talent is there — to view the world and society from different angles and from different binoculars."

Dr. Hourani's talents extend to research and academia. He heads the Al Urdun Al Jadeed Centre (The 'New Jordan' Centre). He and his wife, Suad Issawi Hourani, are also the owners and directors of the Baladna Gallery in Wasfi Tel Street. The exhibition runs until the evening of August 26.

Sultan Ahmet Mosque — Istanbul (photo by Hani Hourani)

Argeeleh gathering in Damascus (Photo by Hani Hourani)

WHAT'S GOING ON

LECTURE

* "Western Conception of Exorbitant Middle Eastern Phenomena" by Dr. Jamal Hassein at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:30 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Abstract (plastic) art by Jordanian artist Khalil Al Kofahi entitled "From Jordan... Man and Charming Nature" at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Aug. 29.
* "A Summer Souvenir" exhibition by Jordan River Designs, Adli Centre, Shmeisani (Tel. 813081/2), until Aug. 25.

Africans seized in France appeal against expulsion

PARIS (R) — Lawyers for a group of Africans seized in a controversial raid on a Paris church tried to block expulsions from France Saturday with a barrage of appeals.

Late Friday night, riot police again used tear gas to disperse stone-throwing protesters demonstrating against immigration laws outside the detention centre in Vincennes on the eastern edge of Paris where the Africans were being held.

There were no reports of serious injuries in any of the clashes. The 210 arrested comprised 99 men, 53 women and 68 children.

Police said women with dependent children among the Africans seized by riot police wielding batons and teargas Friday morning were freed after several hours' detention.

Some men were also freed after the government said it reckoned 30 to 40 per cent would be allowed to stay. Among the 210 people seized in the Saint-Bernard Church in Paris were 10 men on a 50-day-old hunger strike.

The Defence Ministry declined comment on reports that military planes were being readied to fly several dozen of the Africans home Saturday, perhaps on a flight being readied for other illegal immigrants.

Most seized in the church are from Mali, Senegal and Zaire.

Lawyers for the Africans in detention lodged a barrage of appeals with a judge at an administrative tribunal against expulsion orders. The detainees were being held in Vincennes on the eastern edge of Paris.

The left-leaning daily Liberation blasted the government with a front-page photograph of armed, helmeted police breaking into the church alongside a quote from Interior Minister Jean-Louis Debre promising to act with "humanity and feeling."

"For the authorities this is a pyrrhic victory. Wanting to please their electorate, (President) Jacques Chirac and (Prime Minister) Alain Juppe forgot public opinion," it said.

The conservative daily Le Figaro defended the government, saying it had to uphold the law against illegal immigrants even though the raid revived a row over a tightening of immigration laws in 1993.

The centre-right government, backed by a court opinion that none of the Africans in the church had an automatic right to stay in France, has said about 30 or 40 per cent of the protesters would qualify for residence permits.

Left-wing opposition parties accused Mr. Juppe of cynically courting the anti-immigrant National Front, with an eye on 1998 general elections, and of jeopardising France's reputation as a cradle of human rights.

The 1993 laws have left many immigrants in a legal limbo, outlawing some who were previously living in France legally.

Nuns, in white robes and holding prayerbooks, kneel to pray for their ailing leader Mother Teresa at the Missionaries of Charity order in India's eastern city of Calcutta. The 85-year-old Nobel laureate has been in hospital with malaria and heart trouble since Aug. 20 (Reuter photo)

Mother Teresa still fighting for her life

CALCUTTA (R) — Mother Teresa remained in serious condition with a weak heart Saturday, but a doctor said the revered Roman Catholic nun was showing surprising strength as she battled for her life.

"She is showing enormous strength given her age, which has surprised all of us," Dr. S.K. Sen, medical director of Calcutta's Woodlands Nursing Home, told reporters in this eastern Indian city.

Mother Teresa's 86th birthday is next Tuesday.

Dr. Sen said Mother Teresa's fever had fallen and her malaria was under control, but she remained on a respirator in the intensive care unit of the hospital.

"It is worrisome," he said. "It (her condition) is still serious. Her condition is still unchanged. She is conscious. Her cardiac condition remains unstable."

Earlier, local news agencies quoting unnamed authorities said the condition of the world-renowned nun had improved Saturday morning and she was in stable condition.

Dr. Sen said doctors had been able to contain the malaria, and her fever had fallen to 99 degrees Fahrenheit (37.2 Celsius) from 100 degrees F. (37.8 Celsius). The doctor said there had been no significant complications Saturday.

A medical bulletin released by the hospital said Mother Teresa was being treated with antibiotics for a chest infection.

But Dr. Sen said Mother Teresa, winner of the 1979 Nobel Peace Prize and known as the saint of the gutters for her work with the world's poor and destitute, was unable to speak.

"She continues to have respiratory support," Dr. Sen said. "She is not able to speak. She is just making gestures. We are keeping strict vigilance around the clock.

"We tried to take her out of the respirator yesterday but we failed. We would like to wean her out of it later today."

A six-member team of medical specialists has been treating the diminutive nun, who was taken to hospital Tuesday with a high fever and severe vomiting.

While the fever due to malaria had dropped, her heartbeat had remained irregular for the past 48 hours, he said.

Dr. Sen said: "She has not improved. Neither can I say it has deteriorated. We are giving her the same treatment as we would have given to anybody else. But in her case we are feeling the pressure."

The doctor said he was spending half of his day taking telephone inquiries from around the world, and that hospital authorities were allowing only a small number of nuns from Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity order to visit her.

A crowd gathered in Calcutta at the gates of Missionaries of Charity, which has been the hub of Mother Teresa's worldwide efforts to help the poor with nearly 3,000 people ministering to the needy, dying and orphaned in the slums of 200 cities.

Letters poured in from around the world, including messages from Pope John Paul II and Indian Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, nuns at her Missionaries of Charity religious order said.

Britain's Princess Diana has sent a message to Mother Teresa, the nun to whom she has turned several times for spiritual guidance.

Princess Diana's office said Saturday the princess had sent a message to the Nobel Peace Prize-winning missionary as news broke this week of her battle against heart problems and malaria. A spokeswoman declined to release details of the message.

Princess Diana first met the Albanian-born missionary in Rome in 1992. She said afterwards that the meeting had fulfilled her "dearest wish" and the two women have met several times since.

The princess, who has carved out a major role for herself as a helper of the sick and needy, is said to have turned to Mother Teresa for guidance as her marriage crumbled to heir to the British throne Prince Charles.

Mother Teresa said in the past that she was praying for the couple, whose divorce is expected to become final next week.

U.S. General predicts Russian nuclear weapons drop

WASHINGTON (R) — Russia is having trouble developing three new nuclear weapons and the number of its total nuclear warheads is likely to drop to about 3,500 by 2005 whether it signs a START-2 treaty or not, a U.S. general said.

"Based on what I see ... they're going to be at START-2 force levels by about the year 2005 whether they want to or not," Gen. Eugene Habiger, commander of U.S. Nuclear Forces, told reporters.

Gen. Habinger said a U.S. defence analysis concluded that the number of Russian nuclear warheads will drop that low because the weapons were wearing out. He said a Russian arms control official said the same thing publicly in a Red Star article.

Gen. Habiger said he was optimistic, therefore, that the Russian Duma would eventually ratify a second Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-2) limiting U.S.-Russian nuclear weapons to between 3,000 and 3,500 each by 2003.

Gen. Habiger said Russia was developing four new nuclear weapons. One of them, a treaty-compliant SS-27 single-warhead intercontinental ballistic missile, was going well.

"The other three are not," he said.

He would not give details, but said Russian efforts to develop a new submarine-launched nuclear missile, a nuclear missile-firing submarine and nuclear cruise missile were not proceeding "as quickly as you would have seen 10 years ago."

"Even if they developed those systems there wouldn't be the capability, the dollars, the resources to bring up their force structure ... That's going to just run out of shelf life or capability," he said.

Gen. Habiger also said he agreed with a U.S. intelligence assessment that no rogue nation would be able to develop nuclear weapons for at least 15 years, but said the United States should spot such efforts if they come sooner.

"The threat of a bolt out of the blue has been reduced significantly," he said.

The general said U.S. defence planners were also watching China's nuclear development, although he said he did not consider China a nuclear threat to the United States now.

"I cannot predict where they're going," Gen. Habiger said. "But I think we need to be sensitive to the fact that a country with one-fourth of the world's population and the fourth-largest economy — we need to plug it into the equation in terms of our future planning."

Top Dhaka University official quits amid fresh campus violence

DHAKA (AFP) — The top official at strife-torn Dhaka University resigned Saturday amid fresh shootouts that left an opposition student activist hospitalised with bullet wounds, a campus official said.

Vice Chancellor Emajuddin Ahmad "has sent his resignation letter" to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed, who is also the university's chancellor, a campus official told AFP.

There was no immediate confirmation of its acceptance, but the resignation followed the expiry of a 48-hour ultimatum Mr. Ahmad gave the authorities Thursday to stop the armed campus violence and to liberate four dormitories occupied by a student group.

Five days of politically linked campus violence began Monday with rival student groups fighting among themselves and police resorting to guns and crude bombs to stop the clashes.

At least 46 people were injured, including a top opposition student leader, and 29 arrested.

Ahead of Mr. Ahmad's resignation, activists of the Bangladesh Chatra League — which backs Sheikh Hasina's ruling party — and the rival Jatiyatabadi Chatra Dal (JCD), which is tied to the opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), briefly exchanged gunfire near a dormitory.

A JCD member was rushed from the scene to a nearby hospital with bullet wounds, witnesses said.

They said the campus had a deserted look due to the suspension of classes and a day-long protest strike by the JCD.

Police using dogs trained to find bodies start searching again at one of the houses of convicted child rapist Marc Dutroux in Sars-La-Buissiere southern Belgium. Belgium's child-sex scandal already produced two bodies and triggered a Europe-wide alert for paedophile gangs (Reuter photo)

Dutch police detain man in Belgian paedophile case

AMSTERDAM (R) — Police are holding a 74-year old Dutchman after a tipoff in connection with Belgium's probe of a child-kidnapping and pornography scandal, police said Saturday.

Police with sniffer dogs searched a house out in Amstelveen, 15 kilometres south of Amsterdam Thursday evening after receiving information from Belgium.

Police spokesman Klaas Wilting told Reuters two firearms were found at the address but so far no evidence of a direct link with the Belgian case.

"We received some information of a connection to the Belgian investigation and searched the house. We found two guns but so far nothing to connect him to the two missing girls," he said.

No formal charges have yet been brought.

Six people have so far been arrested in Belgium following the rescue a week ago of two kidnapped young girls from a makeshift dungeon in a house owned by Marc Dutroux in Charleroi.

Then followed the discovery of the bodies of two other abducted girls who had starved to death, and a stepped-up hunt for two more girls who Dutroux admitted kidnapping a year ago.

The two dead girls, Julie Lejeune and Melissa Russo, were buried in what was virtually a state funeral in the eastern city of Liege Thursday.

Belgian police searched two more houses Saturday for bodies in the child-sex scandal of murder, kidnapping and pornography that has sent a shockwave of Revulsion throughout Europe.

Recriminations built up over how the scandal's central figure, convicted child rapist Marc Dutroux, managed to prey on children unhindered for so long.

On Saturday investigators with dogs trained to find bodies searched one house at Ransart and one at Mont-Sur-Marchienne — both suburbs of the southern city of Charleroi. Both houses are owned by Mr. Dutroux.

Belgian media speculated that Mr. Dutroux, charged with abduction and illegal imprisonment of children, must have had high level protection to molest youngsters.

They put forward no proof to support the speculation, but seized on a comment by Chief Prosecutor Michel Bourlet on Belgian Television Friday night that he would chase down everyone involved in the case "if I am allowed to."

Mr. Bourlet said between 300 and 400 paedophile porn video tapes had been seized, some of which featured Dutroux.

Dutroux was charged a week ago after police rescued two young girls from the concrete dungeon in the basement of one of the six houses he owns in and around Charleroi.

He also admitted kidnapping two other girls, An Marchal And Eefje Lambrecks, a year ago.

The fate of the girls is unknown, but there has been speculation they were sold into prostitution in Slovakia or the Czech Republic where Mr. Dutroux was a frequent visitor. Belgian police have visited Bratislava and will visit Prague.

Five other people have been arrested including dutroux's second wife Michelle Martin, charged as an accomplice. The others have been charged with abduction and illegal imprisonment of children or are suspected of criminal association.

At least part of the speculation in the Belgian media of high-level protection for Mr. Dutroux and his accomplices is based on leaked documents cataloguing a high degree of police bungling, incompetence and indifference.

Among the revelations are the fact that the Gendarmerie was running a surveillance operation codenamed "Othello" against Mr. Dutroux in 1995 — when both Julie and Melissa and An and Eefje were kidnapped.

They show that the gendarmes were aware that Mr. Dutroux was building cells in some of his houses for holding children, yet this information was either not passed on to other police forces searching for the missing girls or was overlooked when it was.

They also show that police investigating a theft visited Mr. Dutroux late last year at the house where Julie and Melissa were being held but accepted his word that the children's cries they could hear came from neighbours.

Justice Minister Stefaan De Clerck has admitted that mistakes were made and ordered an inquiry at the same time as stressing there were no indications of a cover-up.

There is also widespread disbelief that no one appeared to question how Mr. Dutroux, an unemployed father of three with no visible means of support, managed to own six houses.

New book debunks long-held myths

BERLIN (AFP) — Germans are rushing to buy a new book which purports to set right hundreds of our cherished beliefs about history.

The Dictionary Of Popular Errors is currently a best seller in Germany. The authors, Walter Kraemer and Goetz Trenkler, both university professors, found "500 misunderstandings, prejudices and crucial errors of reasoning" which have become entrenched in popular culture.

For instance, the book says the legend put about by the Nazi propaganda machine that Adolf Hitler conceived the idea for motorways while he was in prison in 1924, is nothing but a myth.

It says the world's first motorway was built in Berlin in 1921. Two years later, an autostrada was completed in Italy. Several motorways were already under construction in Germany when Hitler came to power in 1933, the book notes.

"What is disconcerting is not so much that these beliefs emerge but that they are able to survive for so long," the authors said.

It is also untrue to say that the Guillotine was invented by Dr. Joseph Ignace Guillotin, despite the obvious connection with his name.

According to the book, the Guillotine was introduced into France at the end of the 18th century on the recommendation of a doctor called Antoine Louis De Metz — hence the machine's initial nickname of the "Louisette" or "Petite Louison."

It was only a few years later when France was in the throes of the revolution that the name changed after Citizen Guillotin convinced the National Assembly that the machine was the most humane way to despatch the aristocrats and other supposed "traitors."

Nor, as is widely believed, did former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill coin the expression "the iron curtain" in 1946.

In fact, the words which came to symbolise the divison of Europe for four decades, were first spoken by Queen Elizabeth of Belgium at the beginning of World War I.

"An iron curtain has come down for good between Germany and me," the queen said after German troops invaded Belgium in 1914.

Americans will be disappointed to learn that their country did not invent either chewing gum or tomato ketchup, though both are seen as typical of the United States.

The "ke-tsiap" was brought to the United States by Chinese immigrants before being marketed by one Henry John Heinz.

A form of chewing gum made from the resin of the pistachio tree was popular in ancient Greece.

Among historical myths, the storming of the Bastille is one of the most widely entrenched, even though it never took place, the book says.

Legend has it that thousands of Parisians stormed the Bastille prison on July 14 1789, setting off the French Revolution. In fact, the garrison put up virtually no resistance and surrendered after only few shots had been fired. It was only then that the mob rushed in, smashed up the place and killed the soldiers guarding that symbol of royal despotism.

Today, Germans take pride in the label "made in Germany" which for buyers is often synonymous with good quality. But contrary to the popular view, this was not why it was put on in the first place.

In the 19th century, Britain slapped the label on German products which were then considered inferior, so people would give preference to British goods. A few decades later, the label had turned into a formidable commercial asset for German industry.

Jeanne Moreau defends U.S. film might

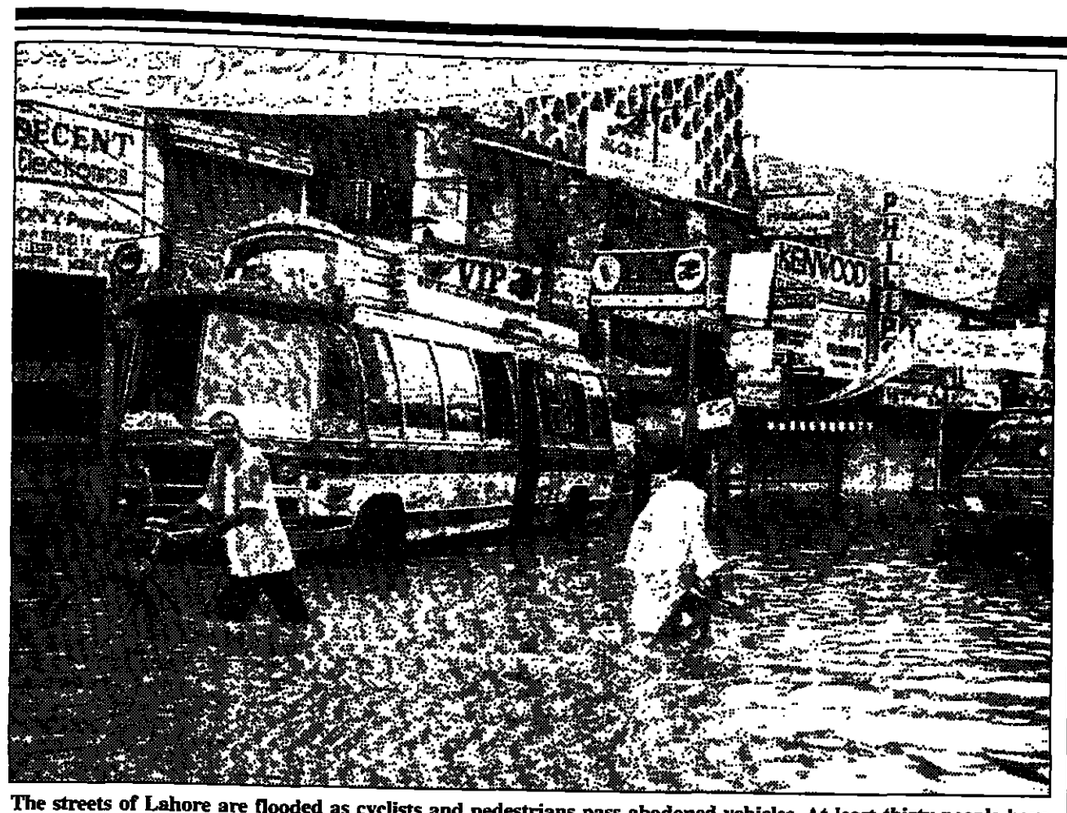
MONTREAL (R) — French film legend Jeanne Moreau, a standard bearer of France's struggling motion picture industry, Friday defended the economic might and international public appeal of American films. "Nobody imposes the American films. They are here because the public likes them, and one has to respect the tastes and the minds of the public," Moreau told reporters at the opening of Montreal's 20th World Film Festival. Moreau, the festival's jury president, responded in both French and English to reporters who pressed her to comment on the "invasion" of U.S. films in national markets worldwide. Having lived through Germany's conquest of France during World War II, Moreau said speaking of a U.S. film "invasion" of France and elsewhere evoked too strong an image. "The word invasion had a sort of connotation for me related to war. So I don't like to use that expression concerning cinema," she said. Moreau said she regularly watched American films but refused to be drawn by film critics into criticising the artistic merit of U.S. movies. Moreau praised the Montreal festival for being truly international in its lineup. Although American director Edward Burns' warmly received romantic comedy, She's The One, made its international premiere to open the festival Thursday, some 400 feature films, shorts and videos from 60 countries were being screened.

Revered skull of S. Africa king is Scottish woman's

JOHANNESBURG (R) — A limelight-loving South African chief was in disgrace Saturday after a prized skull he brought home from Scotland was identified as belonging not to his sacred tribal ancestor, but to a middle-aged white woman. A forensic scientist who examined the supposed skull of 19th century King Hintsa, a chief of President Nelson Mandela's Xhosa tribe killed in battle by the British, said it was in fact the cranium of a European woman. Chief Nicholas Gcaleka, dressed in animal skins and full tribal regalia, journeyed to a wintry Scotland in February on a hugely publicised quest to find Hintsa's skull. The witchdoctor said ancestors had appeared to him in a dream and ordered him to return the head, said to have been carried off as a colonial trophy by the officer who shot and allegedly beheaded Hintsa after a battle in 1835. But Chief Gcaleka ran into trouble as soon as he returned to South Africa with a skull he found in a cottage in a lonely highland forest near Inverness. He said the spirit of a hurricane had guided him there. Members of the Xhosa royal family, branding Chief Gcaleka a charlatan, confiscated the head and sent it for tests to a forensic scientist, who examined the shape of the skull and the hole that he determined had not come, as supposed, from a bullet. "It can be stated beyond reasonable doubt that this skull is not that of the late king," the scientist said in a statement.

Oasis plays secret concert

LONDON (R) — Just a week after performing in front of 250,000 at one of Britain's largest rock events, superstars Oasis played for a select few at a top secret concert. Four hundred excited fans who had won tickets for Friday's intimate concert sat on the edge of their seats ready to hear the British band, often described as the Beatles of the nineties, perform their chart-topping favourties. But the fortunate few were left disappointed when controversial lead singer Liam Gallagher failed to appear on stage. Instead, he watched the show from a private box. "Liam is not going to be with us tonight. He's got a sore throat," brother Noel Gallagher told the selected audience.



The streets of Lahore are flooded as cyclists and pedestrians pass abadoned vehicles. At least thirty people have been killed and about 100 injured in recent flooding, caused by heavy rains in the region where Lahore, capital of Pakistani Punjab province, received 461mm of rain within 38 hours (Reuter photo)

30 said killed in flood-hit Pakistan province

LAHORE, Pakistan (R) — Floods killed at least 30 people and injured 100 in the Pakistani city of Lahore and other parts of Punjab province, newspapers reported Saturday.

Officials in Lahore said seven people had been killed and four injured there Friday and many houses had collapsed. They had no details of the other reported casualties.

They said 461 mm (18 inches) of rain had drenched the Punjab provincial capital in 36 hours, turning streets to rivers, knocking out power, water and telephone services, disrupting air and rail traffic and sweeping away houses and cars.

Pakistan usually receives an average of 140 mm (5-1/2 inches) during the whole July-September monsoon season.

"There's still four feet (1.3 metres) of water on the roads, so there's no transport," said newspaper worker Mohammad Bilal Saturday. "There's no electricity or water at my house."

He said skies had cleared and water was receding, but ground floors and basements of many buildings were still flooded.

"We have been trapped upstairs since 10 a.m. yesterday when water rushed into the ground floor," said resident Mahmoud Sandhu. "We didn't even have time to rescue our things."

They said thousands of people had been made homeless after a breach opened in the city canal, inundating residential areas. Many were given temporary accommodation in school buildings.

Local authorities declared a state of emergency Friday, calling on troops to help evacuate residents of low-lying areas.

An official at the Flood Warning Centre in Lahore said the Ravi and Chenab rivers, which both flow through Punjab, were exceptionally high. Rising water could pose a threat to the Jhang, Muzaffargarh and Rajanpur areas, he said.

The Urdu-language Nawa-I-Waqt newspaper said a girl drowned when water flooded a ward in Lahore General Hospital, where 10 other patients died for lack of treatment.

It said floods had also hit the cities of Sialkot, where a student died in a house collapse, and Wazirabad and Gujrat, north of Lahore. Eight people died in flood-related accidents in the town of Sheikhupura, 50 kilometres west of Lahore.

Three people, including two children, died when a house collapsed in Kahna, a village near Lahore. A man was electrocuted in the same village when a power line fell on him.

A mother and daughter were killed in Gujranwala, 70 kilometres north of Lahore, it said. A child drowned in a water channel in Korang, near the pakistani capital, Islamabad.

Several newspapers said two members of the religious Jamaat-I-Islami party had drowned while trying to remove books from a basement library at the party headquarters in Lahore. One newspaper said five members of the party had died.

Lebed in Chechenya to strike political accord with rebels

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian national security chief Alexander Lebed arrived in Chechenya Saturday voicing confidence of reaching a comprehensive political settlement of the 20-month separatist conflict, Interfax News Agency reported.

Gen. Lebed immediately resumed talks with Russian officials after arriving at 3:30 p.m. (1130 GMT) at Khankala, the Chechen capital's military airport, which has been the Russians' main base in Chechenya for a year and a half.

He was then to travel to Novy Atagi, 25 kilometres south of Grozny, for talks with rebel leaders.

Gen. Lebed earlier told Interfax on board the plane, which took him to Grozny: "The president trusts me fully. The issue of Chechenya's status is difficult but we hope to resolve it in the interests of Russia and the Chechen people."

Gen. Lebed did not rule out that if the talks were complicated they would continue Sunday.

A Chechen rebel spokesman told Interfax that the political accords "will correspond fully to the interests of the Russian Federation and the Chechens," and "the Chechens are willing to sign such a document."

The thorny issue of Chechenya's status "will also be resolved so as to take account of the interests of both sides," the spokesman said, without elaborating.

Gen. Lebed said it was important to return to the Moscow and Nazran peace accords of late spring, which called for a ceasefire, demilitarisation of Chechenya and withdrawal of Russian troops, but none of those conditions were fulfilled.

He was also to inspect Russian and Chechen rebel forces who would form joint headquarters in Grozny, in line with a truce he signed Thursday with Chechen rebel Chief of Staff Aslan Maskhadov.

A Russian military official told Interfax Saturday that Russian troops had started pulling out of Grozny and joint headquarters were being set up in the devastated city, in line with the ceasefire agreement.

Under the accord, Russian soldiers are to withdraw from the southern mountains of Chechenya to the lowlands and from central Grozny to bases on the outskirts.

Joint patrols of 30 men from each side are to prevent armed provocations and looting in Grozny, most of which was seized by the rebels in a surprise offensive on Aug 6.

Previous ceasefires collapsed amid deadlock over Chechenya's political status, with the rebels demanding total independence and Moscow insisting that the breakaway north Caucasus republic must remain part of Russia, and that the rebels must be disarmed.

President Boris Yeltsin Friday authorised Gen. Lebed to pursue negotiations and sign an agreement with the Chechen rebels on a "political settlement" to end the war.

In a telephone call to Gen. Lebed, Mr. Yeltsin said such a settlement would include "a definition of the status of the Chechen Republic as an integral part of the Russian Federation."

Doku Zavgayev, head of the Moscow-installed Chechen government, voiced scepticism about the peace talks Saturday, accusing the rebels of "committing terrorist acts against the population and in particular against the legitimate authorities."

Gen. Lebed's peace deal with the rebels appeared to ignore the Zavgayev government, which is regarded as illegitimate by most Chechens.

Gen. Lebed's talks with Russian officials at the Khankala Base were attended by the commander of Russian troops in the Caucasus republic, General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, and the prime minister of the pro-Russian Chechen government Nikolai Koshman, Interfax said.

On his arrival, Gen. Lebed said he had been told about a number of ceasefire violations by the rebels but added that these incidents should not scupper the key goal of his talks, which was a "comprehensive settlement" of the Chechen conflict.

Gen. Lebed said there was what he called a serious third force that was trying to torpedo the peace process. He said this force had to be taken care of. He did not elaborate.

In Moscow, a close Lebed aide told Interfax that the Russian Security Council had received information about preparations in Chechenya for an attempt on Gen. Lebed's life.

Chechen fighters broke a three-day-old ceasefire Saturday by attacking a column of Russian soldiers in Grozny, wounding four, the Russian military command said.

A military spokesman was quoted by Interfax News Agency as saying that the ambush took place at 12:45 a.m. (0845 GMT) and that the Chechens opened fire with small arms and anti-tank grenade launchers.

Earlier Saturday, there was a separate attack on a Russian position in Grozny, but there were no injuries, the spokesman said.

There was no independent confirmation of the report, nor any word from the Chechen side.

Democrats buoyant ahead of convention

WASHINGTON (R) — Two years after a political meltdown cost the the Democrats control of Congress, President Bill Clinton and his party have much to cheer at their Chicago convention, where they hope to launch Mr. Clinton to reelection.

Mr. Clinton's strong showing in the polls is reason enough for giddiness at the Aug. 26-29 gathering. Although Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole got a bounce from his party's San Diego love-feast, Sen. Dole is still playing catch-up.

In the history of modern American political polling, no presidential candidate who led in the polls on Labour Day has ever been overtaken.

More good news for Democrats is that they are in good shape financially going into the fall campaign for a change, lifting the spirits of their candidates for Congress and governor. All 435 seats in the House of Representatives, 34 Senate seats and 11 governor's races are up for grabs in the Nov. 5 election.

Strangest of all, a party known for its fractiousness is united for once. Mr. Clinton is the first sitting Democratic president since Franklin Roosevelt unopposed for renomination, and Mr. Roosevelt was the last Democratic president to be elected to more than one term.

So this year's Chicago convention bears no comparison with its 1968 predecessor, which saw street-fighting between police and demonstrators over the Vietnam War that left the Democrats divided for more than two decades.

This would have seemed an impossible dream in late 1994, when the Democrats were dejected and disorganised after a Republican election rout that gave Sen. Dole's party control of both houses of Congress for the first time in four decades.

Many Democrats bitterly blamed Mr. Clinton for the debacle, saying the vote reflected public outrage at his policies on homosexuals, guns and health care reform. But such disperate events as the April 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, when Mr. Clinton provided powerful national leadership, and nasty budget battles with the new Republican Congress, helped the self-styled "comeback kid" to redefine himself and brought him to where he is now.

Convention organisers promise that Mr. Clinton's political love-feast will differ from the one staged on Sen. Dole's behalf.

"Our convention will be managed, but not scripted," Clinton campaign manager Peter Knight said, sniping at Republican manoeuvres to prevent an abortion floor fight.

At the same time, Mr. Knight vowed that the Democrats would not subject Sen. Dole and the Republicans to "The same kinds of insults and character attacks" that Clinton partisans believe was standard fare in San Diego.

"We expect this (convention) to be focused on issues, not insults," White House Communications Director Donald Baer told reporters.

Sen. Dole himself will campaign in the Chicago area Sunday, attend a picnic in Palos Park, a southwest suburb about 17 miles (27 kilometres) from the convention arena.

Mr. Clinton will arrive in Chicago Wednesday after a four-day train trip through the country's mid-section, a battleground in his contest with Sen. Dole and independent Ross Perot.

Along the way, he will make a string of what the White House hopes will be headline-grabbing policy announcements about crime, education and the environment, all issues that resonate with the voters.

As the convention awaits its nominee, the delegates will get a steady diet of convention oratory. Primetime speakers include keynoter Evan Bayh, the Democratic governor of Indiana, Hillary Rodham Clinton and Vice President Al Gore.

Popular culture plays supporting role in U.S. campaign

WASHINGTON (AFP) — President Bill Clinton, the first baby-boom president, is also clearly the Hollywood president, in sharp contrast to his Republican rival Bob Dole.

Mr. Clinton can count on the support of celebrities like Lauren Bacall, Barbra Streisand, Richard Dreyfus, Elisabeth Shue and singer Jessye Norman even before next week's Democratic convention officially declares him the party's nominee.

Actor Christopher Reeve, the former Superman who was paralysed in a horseback riding accident, will address the convention Monday night in his capacity as advocate for the disabled.

Mr. Clinton, who invited Hollywood stars to his 50th birthday bash — has made it clear since the 1992 campaign that led him to the White House that he revels in popular culture.

Mr. Clinton's birthday celebration had assembled a show business "who's who", including Whoopi Goldberg, Tony Bennett, Bon Jovi, Carly Simon, Kenny Rogers and Aretha Franklin.

Not since a sultry Marilyn Monroe sang "Happy Birthday, Mr. President" while then-President John Kennedy blew out 45 candles had such a crowd gathered to celebrate a U.S. head of state's birthday.

In 1992, Mr. Clinton appeared on Music Television (MTV), and had even regaled evening talk-show audiences with saxophone solos.

Like his fellow 77 million baby boomers — born between 1946-1964 — Mr. Clinton grew up watching television and going to the movies, two activities he continues to profess to love.

In sharp contrast, the Republican convention in San Diego shunned entertainment figures in favour of military celebrities like retired General Colin Powell and a pilot who was shot down over Bosnia.

Republican former Presidents George Bush and Gerald Ford were there, and nearly every speaker invoked the spirit of conservative 1980s icon — and former actor — Ronald Reagan.

The Washington Post wrote about the few celebrities present, including a few country-music singers, actress Bo Derek, two former Miss Americas and actors or athletes turned politicians, including Sonny Bono and vice-presidential nominee Jack Kemp.

Republican nominee Dole has repeatedly lashed out at the "decadence" and the "nightmares of depravity" produced by an entertainment industry he says spends its time "bombarding ... children with destructive messages of casual violence and even more casual sex."

The former senator from Kansas made a vitriolic attack on rap music, saying it was "music extolling the pleasures of raping, torturing and mutilating women."

While celebrities — like all other citizens — have but one vote to cast and are limited by law in the amount they can contribute to a campaign, their support can be priceless.

"They are professional communicators, they can illuminate and communicate an issue in an effective way," says Andy Brewlau, a Democratic National Committee official.

Eager to appear "presidential" during the 1996 campaign, Mr. Clinton has not yet been seen with a saxophone, although he continues to be surrounded by celebrities, whom he often invites to the White House.

Minister: Russian Armed Forces underfunded

MOSCOW (R) — Russian Defence Minister Igor Rodionov said Friday defence spending had been cut too far in the draft 1997 budget and blamed other ministries, keen to have their own troops, of robbing the armed forces.

Interfax News Agency quoted Mr. Rodionov as saying his ministry's request — for substantial funds for the armed forces — had been ignored by the budget planners.

"The budget request, drawn up on the basis of scrupulous analysis of the most urgent needs of the army and the navy, has not even been considered," said Mr. Rodionov, appointed to the post less than two months ago.

President Boris Yeltsin, naming Mr. Rodionov for the job, ordered him to transform Russia's huge military force left over from the Soviet past into a smaller, more efficient professional armed force by 2000.

Mr. Rodionov backed this idea but also insisted the military reform, which his predecessor Pavel Grachev had failed to start, needed proper funding.

Interfax said the draft 1997 budget included 100.8 trillion roubles ($19 billion) for defence, well short of the 260 trillion roubles requested by the ministry.

The draft budget provides for 511 trillion roubles of total spending.

Mr. Rodionov, whose forces are battling separatists in breakaway Chechenya, said reducing the number of other troops controlled by different ministries could be an extra source of cash for the armed forces.

The Russian Interior Ministry, the Ministry for Emergency Situations, the Federal Security Service, the Federal Border Guard Service and a number of others all command troops, totalling more than those in the army and navy.

"There are several parallel armies in the country," Mr. Rodionov said. "They consume a growing amount of resources and often fail to carry out their duties. Here is the source of saving state funds."

Pilgrims stranded in Himalayas; 84 die

SRINAGAR, India (R) — At least 84 Hindu pilgrims braving snow and rain have died from exposure in the Himalayan Mountains along a rugged route to a 3,880-metre (12,725-ft) high cave, officials said Saturday.

Nearly 70,000 pilgrims, including many naked devotees, were stranded and authorities in Kashmir have suspended the annual pilgrimage, the officials said.

The trek through India's only Muslim majority state began last week and had been scheduled to end next Wednesday.

"At least 84 pilgrims have died of cold so far," said K.B. Jandial, a spokesman for Jammu and Kashmir. "We have suspended the movement of pilgrims who are stranded at different places in the state."

On Friday, police in Srinigar, the state's summer capital, said 24 devotees had died since Thursday.

Mr. Jandial said the pilgrimage had not been cancelled but could not say when it might be resumed.

Officials said some 112,000 Hindus had arrived in Kashmir this year to visit the Amarnath Cave, where devotees worship an ice stalagmite believed to be a manifestation of the "Lingam," or Phallus, of the Hindu god Shiva.

Floods and landslides caused by torrential rains have forced authorities to close the 300-kilometre highway between Srinagar and Jammu in the south.

Around 25,000 pilgrims were stranded in Jammu, the state's winter capital, officials said.

"We have advised all pilgrims stranded in Udhampur and Jammu to go back because it will take more than three days to clear the Jammu-Srinagar Highway," Mr. Jandial said.

Police said they expected more deaths as incessant rain and snow were hampering rescue operations.

"At least 5,000 people are stranded in the higher reaches of Pahalgam, where the temperature has fallen to freezing," a senior official said. "The pilgrims are not equipped to handle the weather situation."

From Pahalgam onwards, the pilgrims have to use ponies or trek 50 kilometres through the mountains to get to the cave. The rains had flooded all the roads to Pahalgam, officials said.

"The main reason for these deaths is that the pilgrims were not equipped with warm clothing and most of the holy men who died were trekking naked," Asrar Ahmad, a doctor at a pilgrim camp in Anantnag, 50 kilometres south of Srinagar, told Reuters.

Last year the pilgrimage was threatened by Muslim separatist guerrillas, who staged two bomb attacks on the heavily guarded pilgrims. A state civil servant was killed in one of the blasts.

Some 20,000 people have died since a separatist revolt broke out in 1990 in Jammu and Kashmir, police and hospital sources say.

This year guerrillas issued no ban on the pilgrimage. Instead, the weather has proved an obstacle, with snow a foot deep at some points on the pilgrims' route, officials said.

Authorities are making arrangements to fly out some of the stranded pilgrims to Jammu or the Indian capital New Delhi, Mr. Jandial said.

2 Western hostages sighted in Kashmir

JAMMU, India (AFP) — Two of the four Western hostages abducted by Muslim separatists in Kashmir over a year ago have been sighted, witnesses said Saturday.

Two junior officials of the Kashmir administration said they spotted the hostages four to six days ago between Aug. 18 and 20 at Bajpathri, nearly 270 kilometres north of Jammu.

One of the witnesses told AFP: "We saw the foreigners with about 16 armed men. When we tried to go nearer, we were shouted at by the armed men. We ran back."

They added they had informed their seniors and the police.

Kashmir officials could not be immediately reached for comment.

Muslim militants kidnapped Britons Paul Wells and Keith Mangan, American Donald Hutchings and German Dirk Hasert in the Himalayas in July last year.

They also seized another American, John Childs, and a Norwegian, Hans Christian-Ostro. Childs escaped, while Christian-Ostro was beheaded by the militants in August.

The witnesses, a forest guard and a medical assistant, both Muslims, could not identify the hostages they spotted.

"They had long beards," one said. "When we began moving away from the mountains, a group of shepherds were also walking away after being ordered to by the abductors."

The kidnappings have been claimed by Al Faran, a Muslim group which sought to exchange them for 15 jailed guerrillas. New Delhi rejected the demand.

Confusion over whether the hostages are still alive has grown following a series of conflicting reports.

In June an abortive search was carried out around Magam Rakh, 80 kilometres south of Srinigar, after the capture of a Muslim militant who reportedly told interrogators the hostages had been killed.

Zaire expels 28 Rwandans; 17 jailed

KIGALI (R) — Zaire has expelled 28 Rwan-dan Hutus from refugee camps in eastern Zaire and Rwandan authorities immediately jailed 17 of them, a spokesman for Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated army said Saturday.

The refugees — described as "prisoners" by the spokesman — were handed over Friday, a day after Zairean Prime Minister Kengo Wa Dondo said on a visit to Rwanda that his country would expel all refugees back to Rwanda. He gave no timeframe.

Rwandan army spokesman Captain Firmin Gatera told Reuters in Kigali that 17 of the 28 refugees handed over from the Zairean town of Goma had been soldiers in the former Hutu army which fled to Zaire in 1994 after being defeated by Tutsi forces in Rwanda's civil war.

"These people are now in Gisenyi Prison," Gatera added. He said the Zairean authorities had accused them of being "trouble-makers" in the teeming refugee camps in eastern Zaire.

Zaire is home to 1.1 million Rwandan Hutu refugees who fled three months of civil war in 1994. Many had taken part in the genocide that year of one million people, mostly Tutsis, and refuse to go home for fear of reprisal at the hands of the new Tutsi-dominated government in Kigali.

Tens of thousands of genocide suspects, mostly Hutus, are languishing inside Rwandan jails.

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Development requires peace

ONE OF the areas that has been hit hard by the election of the hardline Israeli prime minister, Benyamin Netanyahu, is the prospect of economic cooperation in the Middle East. Mr. Netanyahu's predecessor, Shimon Peres, pushed forward the idea of a Middle East that is linked by railways and super highways where Israeli technology, Turkish water and Arab labour and finance would turn the region into a Garden of Eden.

The idea was boosted by the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summits that were held in Casablanca in 1994 and in Amman in 1995. During the Amman conference, which was attended by U.S., European, Israeli and Arab delegates, with the exception of Syria and Lebanon, a number of institutions were created to ensure progress in this direction. Chief among those institutions is the Middle East Development Bank that would be based in Cairo, the venue of this year's third MENA summit.

Statements coming out of Cairo these days speak of Egyptian reluctance to host the conference. Cairo says there is very little sense in holding the summit if there was no progress in the peace negotiations and if some countries boycotted the gathering.

Egypt is right. There is not much hope for the summit to succeed if some progress on the stalled tracks of the peace process between Israel on the one hand and Syria, Lebanon and the Palestinians on the other is not achieved.

Israel has thus far been reluctant to put into effect the economic agreements that it signed with Jordan and the Palestinians. It still closes its borders to Palestinian labour while it imports 200,000 workers from outside the region. Furthermore, Syria and Lebanon should become major partners in the integrated economic market of the Middle East if the ground project is ever to see the light of the day, especially if Turkish workers are to be drawn southwards to Israel and Jordan.

***We hope, however, that some progress will be* achieved before November to make the holding of the MENA summit possible. Mr. Netanyahu should realise that the Middle East cannot develop fast enough unless all countries of the region work together. But most importantly, he should realise this can never happen before a comprehensive political settlement that guarantees the Palestinians, the Syrians and the Lebanese their full rights.**

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

JORDAN HAS more than 100,000 archaeological sites which can by no means be guarded against thieves by the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities' 250 guards, said Ghassan Abdul Khaleq, a writer for **Al Ra'i**. There are thousands of merchants abroad interested in acquiring artefacts from Jordan, but the Jordanian government can do nothing against their buying Jordanian antiquities coming their way, he said. The government, he said, can impose the maximum penalty on those who trade in artefacts dug up illegally in Jordan by people whose main objective is to find a buyer for them abroad. He said that persons who steal Jordan's treasures commit a crime against the whole nation for the sake of making personal fortunes and not out of want to buy food. The writer voiced support for the recent minister of tourism's statement that stricter laws will be applied against thefts of this nature, but he said the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities' capabilities should be enhanced so that it can protect the nation's patrimony and cultural wealth.

THE ARABS can enjoy no real peace or achieve what they call "national security" as long as they remain weak and impotent vis-a-vis Israel and its formidable arsenal of conventional and nuclear weapons, said Taher Adwan, a writer for **Al Dustour**. The Arab countries must acquire all means that ensure self-defence and they are particularly in need of missiles which they can use to protect their lands, their water resources and their economic installations, said the writer. He said the Arabs need sophisticated weapons because Israel rejects the idea of peace, refuses to pull out from the occupied Arab lands and continues to build Jewish settlements on Arab territories. No national security can be achieved while the American forces continue to have easy access to any of the Arab countries in the Gulf and as long as the United States openly declares itself to be a strategic ally of Israel, providing it with economic and military power to perpetuate its occupation of the Arab lands, continued the writer. The recent reports about American-Israeli cooperation in the production of long-range missiles, said the writer, should sound the alarm in the Arab countries which must seek sophisticated missiles of all kind to ensure the desired national security.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

1988 a turnaround in economic policy orientation

FOR TWENTY years until 1988, certain economic policies were adopted by all Jordanian governments, and were, at the time, taken for granted as being proper and wise. *Those policies led the country in a dead street and* finally proved to be a sure recipe for bankruptcy. We needed a major crisis in 1988 to radically reconsider our economic policy and shift its orientation 180 degrees to adopt brand new policies, which could right the wrong, remove distortions, and put us on the right track.

Economic policies of the past can be summarised under six main themes:

First, the building of a large and dominating public sector, which was in charge of the whole economic life. Public sector virtually reduced the Jordanian people into employees working for the state. This state of affairs was compatible with our authoritative system of government in particular, and the totalitarian regimes in the region *around us in general.*

Second, the heavy dependence on foreign aid which started as British aid in return for controlling the army. America replaced Britain as a source of financial aid immediately after the Jordanian-British treaty was abolished in 1956. American aid continued to flow until 1967, when Arab Gulf states took over the responsibility of funding the Jordanian budget to the extent of 40 per cent, if not more.

Third, the extensive dependency of the Treasury on external and internal borrowing. So much so that Jordan became the No. 1 country, most heavily ridden by debt, *relative to the size of its economy.* External debt reached 200 per cent of Gross Domestic Product in 1989. Debt service grew beyond the capacity of the Jordanian economy to service, and the bubble burst in October 1988.

Fourth, the direct governmental intervention in decision-making including imports, exports, pricing, and investing. Profits or losses of private enterprises, and their success or failure, depended to a great extent on government decisions rather than their efficiency and competitiveness in the market place.

Fifth, general subsidies were extended across the board to cover a wide range of commodities and services including fuel, meat, milk, bread, fodder, water, electricity etc. The purpose was to buy loyalties and keep opposition at bay.

Sixth, living way beyond the means of the country and its resources. The per capita private consumption in 1980 was 90 per cent higher than it is now, thanks to high population growth, higher prices, and economic adjustment.

We don't need to condemn those old policies and orientations, because their disastrous outcome speaks for itself.

The present policies which were grudgingly embraced in 1989 represent the International Monetary Fund economic adjustment programme.

In a nutshell they call for controlling the aggregate demand, reducing the fiscal deficit in the central government budget, which was a good indicator of financial dependency on, and exposure to external factors, reducing the deficit in the current account of the balance of payments to bring about a balance between receipts and payments of foreign exchange, liberalising the economy to follow the signals of the market, shifting emphasis from import substitution to export-led growth, removing distortions which were entrenched in the economy and prevented the efficient allocation of resources, opening up to the global market, achieving higher economic growth rates, restoring the stability of the Jordanian dinar exchange rate, and building safety nets to give the adjustment a human face and protect the weak groups of the society who cannot survive competition.

The declining trend of the Jordanian economy in the 1980s under the old economic policies, and the turmoil that followed, gave way to stability and started an upward trend as of 1992.

Although the outdated policies proved to be a failure, yet they still have some adherers and supporters with high voices. They pose as defenders of the people's best interests, while in reality they count among the obstacles and impediments in the way of social and economic progress.

The real threat of Iranian terrorism

Although they pose little risk to Western targets on Western soil, the activities of Iranian extremists are driving a wedge between the U.S. and Europe, writes **Nicholas Bethell**

IRAN IS the fountain of all terrorism, at least this was the word from Washington in the wake of the TWA disaster, violence in Bahrain and the explosion at Al Khobar in Saudi Arabia. Press leaks from the U.S. administration, some of them inspired by secretary of defence, William Perry, on his return from the Gulf, give the impression that the ayatollahs have upped the terrorist stakes and are now embarked on a new policy of mass murder throughout the Western world.

Strong American feelings about Iran date back to their expulsion from the country in 1979-80 and the hostage crisis, when the United States was humiliated, its foreign service most of all. Several key State Department officials from that wretched year, including Warren Christopher and Tony Lake, are in even more powerful positions today. There is a presidential election and Mr. Clinton is expected to "do something" against Iran, which has few friends among those who will be voting in November.

Recently American officials have had to backtrack, at the same time analysing what Iranian terrorism actually is. What do these violent men of Islam do? What are their targets? Are they escalating their campaign?

Western experts agree that, whereas Iran is undoubtedly among the world's worst terrorist nations, it is not yet in the business of attacking Western targets on American or European territory. Recent events offer no good reason why this analysis should be varied.

Their most blatant behaviour is reserved for action against individual Iranian dissidents. Twelve have been murdered in Europe so far this year, most of them members of the left-wing Mujahedeen Khalq violent opposition movement, others of them former high officials from the Shah's regime. Iran admits nothing, but it sees itself as entitled to kill Mujahedeen members. They are, after all, funded by the great enemy, Baghdad, and they carry out acts of violence inside Iran in pursuit of their declared aim, the overthrow of the Islamic republic.

Some days ago, I asked Iran's deputy foreign minister, Javad Zarif, why his government had named a nearby street after the hunger striker Bobby Sands, so giving the impression that Iran supports the Irish Republican Army. He replied: "It is because you in Britain give safe haven to terrorists from the Mujahedeen, who kill our people. Men from your House of Commons and House of Lords receive them and speak up for them."

The Iranian charge d'affaires in London, Gholamreza Ansari, says: "A large and *unbelievable number of innocent* civilian people, including a president and a prime minister, MPs and ministers, have been killed by the Mujahedeen in Iran." Iran's director of prisons, Assadullah Lajavardi, told me: "These communists come into our country and kill maybe 50 of our people. Should we leave them alone to kill another 50? They deserve to be executed."

I am sure that Mr. Lajavardi *meant that such people should* be executed outside Iran as well as inside it. And he would see countries like Britain, France, and Germany, which allow the Mujahedeen to operate politically, as their accomplices. He would think of Iran as a victim of terrorism rather than as a perpetrator.

However, it is not only the violent who are killed by Iranian agents. Two such men are today in prison in France, convicted of having cut the throat of the Shah's last prime minister, Shahpour Bakhtiar, in Paris in August 1991. In Germany there is a warrant out for the arrest of Iran's minister for intelligence for allegedly bombing a dissident group in Berlin in 1994. British officials believe that in recent years, 40 dissidents, by no means all of them violent, have been killed in Europe by the Iranian secret police, and others in Turkey and Iraq.

In spite of the overwhelming evidence available to Western experts on the Bakhtiar case and others, the Iranian government refuses to admit that it has ever acted violently outside its own borders. "Show me your proof," said Mahmoud Vaezi, Iran's minister for relations with Europe and America, when I put the Bakhtiar case to him. "These are no more than rumours dreamt up by our enemies in Iraq, or by Israel." But he knew, I think, that I did not believe him.

In one particular case Iran has been ready to act against a Western target. This is the matter of Salman Rushdie. But Iran today would like the Rushdie issue to be forgotten. The chairman of the Iranian Parliament's Committee on Foreign Policy, Mohammad Larajani, says: "Iran has disassociated itself from the fatwah. There will be no Iranian hit squads trying to carry out the death sentence. These assurances ought to be enough for you, but Britain wants more. Britain demands that we sign a paper that amounts to an admission of guilt. This is unacceptable."

Again, Dr. Larajani was being less than candid. An Iranian religious foundation known as "15th Khordad" still offers a $2m bounty to anyone who kills the British writer. This is an incitement to murder that Iran does nothing to silence.

Iran's protestation that its government cannot interfere in the finances of a private body does not impress the British side. Meanwhile, there are still, probably, Iranian agents *keen to carry out what* Ayatollah Khomeini ordered.

Another area of violence where Iran is active involves terrorism against Israel. British officials believe that Iranian agents were responsible for the bomb explosion and consequent loss of life at the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires last year. Iran also, by its own admission, helps the Hizbollah movement in Lebanon, which fires rockets into Israeli territory. *Iran will not concede that* this amounts to complicity in terrorism.

Dr. Zairf says: "Hizbollah has elected members in the Lebanese parliament and it is not easy to call them terrorists just because they oppose the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon. We help Hizbollah with food and medicines." Again, he is not telling the full truth.

A third category of Iranian terrorism involves the Persian Gulf area, especially Bahrain, where there is Shiite majority and where Iran has been closely engaged for many decades. British experts are convinced that some at least of the recent violence in Bahrain is Iran's work, to the extent that some of those involved were trained in Iranian camps in subversive techniques and provided with equipment and money.

Yet even here, Iran admits nothing and tries to justify a strong political stance. Mr. Vaezi says: "Why does the West emphasise Iran's human rights problems? Kuwait has no valid parliament at all. Neither does Bahrain. In Saudi Arabia, a woman cannot drive a car and Christian worship is forbidden. Yet you never criticise these countries. You only attack Iran. You are very selective." Inevitably one is brought back to the Al Khobar bomb and the alarming reports emerging from Washington sources these past days. The difference between TWA and Al Khobar is that, whereas there is no evidence at all to link Iran with the TWA outrage, any more than there is with the World Trade Centre or Oklahoma or Atlanta explosions, there are some circumstantial features of the Saudi Arabian bombing that give rise to suspicion.

American experts are now no longer jumping to conclusions, but they are worried by how skilfully and effectively the Al Khobar operation was carried out. They doubt whether Saudi Arabian dissidents on their own would be capable of such a spectacular achievement against a tough American target. They sense foreign involvement and they know how deeply Iran resents the American military presence in Saudi Arabia.

They also detect in Iranian press reports of the explosion the same triumphalism as followed the bombing of the U.S. Marine base in Beirut in 1984. The Iranian media is taking pains to remind Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states that the death of American Marines in 1984 was followed by *American withdrawal from* Lebanon, with dire consequences for America's friends in that country. American analysts, while agreeing that the evidence against Iran in this matter remains circumstantial, see this as a very threatening message.

The experts do not, therefore, blame Iran for purely anti-Western outrages, although they are sure of Iranian guilt in the three categories *of terrorism mentioned* above.

For instance, they hold Libya, not Iran, responsible for the Lockerbie disaster. Even though Iran has an apparent motive for revenge — the accidental destruction of an Iranian airliner by an American missile — Iran's name is not in the frame over Lockerbie. The evidence assembled by the Scottish police, which cannot yet be made public, points clearly to the two named Libyan assassins.

British officials nevertheless remain suspicious of Iranian intentions in the Rushdie case and they believe that Iran has the ability to attack more Western targets in the West, if their policies should change. Men are being trained in Iran for this eventuality and they can be activated if the West increases its pressure. Also an aggressive posture towards Europe and North America remains one of the characteristics of the Islamic revolution. *And although many in Iran* would like this to change and more practical policies to prevail, there is nothing yet to suggest that Mr. Rafsanjani and his clerical rulers will allow such a change of policy, or that the technologists will be able to overrule the men of religious principle.

One of the most serious consequences for the Western world is that divisions now arise between Europe and the U.S. This was shown most vividly in April 1995 when the American company Conoco was awarded a $600m contract for an Iranian gas project. The U.S. administration stepped in to prevent Conoco from concluding the deal, only to see it picked up by the French company CFP Totale.

An American official says: "The Europeans really irritate us over Iran. We make sacrifices in an effort to tackle a problem that threatens the security of us all, only to see our allies making profits out of what we have voluntarily given up. It is all very well for Europe to engage in 'critical dialogue'. We would do the same. We do not want to start a war. But if dialogue fails and terrorism continues, one must be prepared to exert pressure. Europe is not doing this."

The European Union, on the other hand, is conscious of the great export potential of Iran. It sees the Iranian issue as illustrating American foreign policy at its most clumsy, with an administration keen to demonstrate its machismo in the run-up to an election, indulging in frothy press releases and unreliable briefings which it then has to retract, and then proceeds to try to enforce American law outside American territory.

Iran, therefore, is happy to continue its carefully planned scale of terrorism, avoiding Western targets but using violent means in many other parts of the world. From the point of view of the mullahs, this policy has several merits. It is cautious enough to prevent the U.S. from being so angered that they launch an armed response. At the same time, it is bold enough to keep the fervour of Islamic revolution alive, to infuriate the entire Western world and to create divisions between Europe and North America — *The Independent.*

Erbakan gives Islamist spin to diplomacy

By Jonathan Lyons
Reuter

ISTANBUL — Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan has used his first overseas trip, to Iran and mainly Muslim Asian states, to give the pursuit of basic Turkish interests a gloss of Islamist solidarity.

The result is a new-look Turkish foreign policy but no real threat — as feared in Western capitals — to Ankara's close security and economic ties to its NATO allies. The trip also marked Ankara's first real foray into the Pacific rim.

Analysts say headlines about a clash with Washington over a $23 billion gas deal with Iran and dreams of an "Islamic Airbus" consortium have distracted attention from the traditional economic and political goals of Mr. Erbakan's 10-day tour.

At the same time, they say, the visit to four Muslim states — plus Singapore — has given Turkey's first Islamist prime minister a boost with his Welfare Party faithful, unnerved by recent concessions to Western demands.

"The natural gas deal is important for Turkey," said Dogu Ergil, a leading expert on relations with the Middle East.

"There is nothing ideological about it. Turkey is facing an energy crisis," Mr. Ergil told Reuters, noting that big financial and technical obstacles remained before the project could be realised.

"This deal was in the works for a long time," said Ilnur Cevik, editor of the Turkish daily news and a confidant of the prime minister.

"It was not Erbakan but the former (secularist) energy minister who warned of an energy crisis. It has nothing to do with Islam," said Mr. Cevik, who *accompanied* the prime minister.

Western analysts largely agree.

"There are good, sound economic reasons why the Iran gas deal should be signed, but going there first and making it a theme of the whole trip shows a change of emphasis," said one NATO diplomat.

Washington, a close ally, rebuked Turkey for the gas supply deal signed one week after enactment of a U.S. law to penalise companies investing in energy projects in Libya or Iran. The White House cites both countries as sponsors of terrorism.

However, U.S. condemnation has been tempered by sympathy for Turkey's growing energy shortfalls.

Turkey consumes nearly nine billion cubic metres (318 billion cubic feet) of gas a year, almost all imported from Russia. The Iranian deal would supply an initial three billion cubic metres (106 billion cubic feet) from 1999.

Energy ministry projections show Turkey will produce about 93 billion kilowatt hours (kwh) of power this year, with consumption set at 97.5 billion kwh. The shortage will be bridged for now by electric power imports from neighbouring Iran and elsewhere.

"What could be more natural than us getting such cheap, abundant natural gas from right next door?" Mr. Erbakan told reporters on his return.

Likewise, Mr. Erbakan played the Islamist card in a bid to increase trade and improve security in what Turkish officials like to refer to as "a rough neighbourhood".

Aides say he made the gas deal contingent on Iran's curtailing support for the separatist Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which is waging a bloody insurgency against Turkish forces. "He was very blunt, very tough," said one participant.

Asian tigers Malaysia and Indonesia were given pride of place on the itinerary to underscore their success in blending Western-style development with traditional Islamic values.

Officials say Mr. Erbakan signed export trade deals worth up to $4.5 billion, providing a stimulus to the troubled economy.

Among the deals were accords with Pakistan to begin joint projects in defence and production of transport aircraft. Turkey will also export heavy farm equipment.

Turkey and Malaysia agreed to cooperate in aviation and the manufacture of armoured combat vehicles, frigates and submarines, while Turkey and Indonesia agreed aviation deals of their own. Few details have so far emerged.

Whatever the economic benefits, Mr. Erbakan won renewed goodwill from his Islamist constituents, some of whom feared he had made too many concessions to the West since taking office in June.

These included dropping his opposition to the U.S.-led air force patrolling northern Iraq from a Turkish base and abandoning efforts to scrap a military training deal with Israel that angered Muslims at home and abroad.

"Welcome back great leader," said Milli Gazete, the Welfare Party daily. "You have fulfilled the responsibility of fraternity on us all by visiting approximately 500 million Muslims."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkish delegation in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A delegation representing the Turkish pharmaceutical industry has arrived here ahead of the easing of U.N. sanctions imposed on Iraq for its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, officials said Saturday. In a statement, the Turkish embassy here said the 56-member delegation representing 26 companies was scheduled to meet Iraqi Health Minister Omid Medhat Mubarak and display their wares at a trade fair. The visit is aimed at securing contracts and boosting bilateral relations between Turkey and Iraq, strained following the Gulf war but improving in the wake of the election of Turkey's pro-Islamist Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan.

Egypt urges U.K. to ban conference

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt has urged the British government to prevent the holding of an international Islamic conference next month in London, a police source said on Saturday. "The Egyptian authorities have asked British officials to stop the holding of the conference of terrorist leaders on Sept. 8 in London," said the source. "Cairo asked the British embassy not to give visas to Egyptian Islamists who are asking for them to go to London to take part in this meeting," he added. "Egypt and several Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, have let the British authorities know of their deep concern over the holding of this conference which will bring together 14,000 members of fundamentalist groups," the source said.

Iranian party-goers to be lashed

TEHRAN (AFP) — Twenty-five young Iranians have been arrested and sentenced to 10 lashes of the whip for attending a "depraved" dance party in Tehran, the newspaper Keyhan reported Saturday. Police arrested 28 boys and girls between the ages of 17 and 20 years old at the dance party Thursday night in an apartment in the Velenjak district of the capital, the newspaper said. Twenty-five of the party-goers were sentenced to be whipped 10 times while three boys were jailed, it said. The owner of the apartment was fined 500,000 riyals ($120). Police, acting on a tipoff from local residents, also seized music and video-cassettes from the apartment, the newspaper said. Dancing between men and women is frowned upon in the Islamic republic and pop music, while not formally banned, is viewed with suspicion by the religious authorities.

Top Egyptian journalist dies

CAIRO (AP) — Ahmad Bahaddin, a prominent Egyptian journalist and author, died Saturday in the Mediterranean port city of Alexandria. He was 69. Bahaddin, a native of Alexandria, died of heart failure, Egypt's Middle East News Agency said. He had suffered a stroke in 1989 and was treated in London, but he has been in poor health in recent years, the agency said. After graduating from law school in Cairo, Bahaddin worked as a lawyer in the state prosecutor's office in the 1950s but later resigned and sought a career in journalism. He rose to become editor of several weeklies, including Rose Al Youssef magazine, and the state-run daily Al Ahram. He served as head of the Egyptian press syndicate and president of the Arab Journalists' Union.

Tunisian party ousted from HQ

TUNIS (R) — Tunisia's main opposition party on Saturday announced that it had been ousted from its headquarters building by a court decision for failing to pay the rent. Mohammad Ali Khalfallah, spokesman for the Movement of Socialist Democrats (MDS) said that a bailiff who was accompanied by policemen, on Saturday ordered the party to leave the building. "We were not allowed a delay to enable us to transfer the movement's goods and documents," Mr. Khalfallah added in a statement. The building is state property.

Clinton regains strong lead

NEW YORK (AFP) — President Bill Clinton has regained a significant lead, outpacing his Republican Rival Bob Dole by seven points in a Newsweek poll released Saturday. The survey showed the Democratic president getting 47 per cent, Mr. Dole 40 per cent and Texas billionaire Ross Perot of the Reform Party, seven per cent. One week ago, a Newsweek poll carried out shortly after Mr. Dole formally accepted his party's nomination as a presidential candidate had Mr. Clinton's lead narrowing to two percentage points, from 20 a week before that.

Sudan residents stage protest

CAIRO (AFP) — Authorities were hunting down student demonstrators in Sudan after dispersing protests by other residents against water shortages and lengthy power outages, the Sudanese opposition said Saturday. Protests broke out in Omdurman, sister city of the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, Friday night and Saturday morning after two weeks of water shortages and electricity cuts, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) said in a statement received here by AFP.

Yilmaz reelected party leader

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkey's main opposition Motherland Party on Saturday over whelmingly reelected former Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz as its leader at a party congress here. Mr. Yilmaz received 1,032 votes from 1,202 party delegates, while his only rival Isin Celebi, a former economy minister, managed a mere 170. "We will work hard all together to bring Motherland back to power," Mr. Yilmaz told delegates of the conservative part

Algeria drafts new election law

PARIS (R) — Algeria's presidency and opposition parties have drawn up an election law to introduce proportional representation instead of the two round majority system that brought Islamists close to power five years ago and violence when the vote was cancelled. "Twenty-nine political parties and presidency's representatives unanimously agreed on the new text of the election law after nine days of debate," an opposition party spokesman involved in preparing the draft said on Saturday. Political parties and government representatives earlier this week also drafted a law that would ban Islamists parties.

Sustainability of development by means of ecological management

By Walter Rüdel

After 24 years, since the publication of the Club of Rome's Limits of Growth, a slow momentum is forming, with the notion that our traditional conception of economics, based on the concept of continuing, ever-increasing growth, has no future, as natural resources are overtaxed, air, soil and water are becoming ever more contaminated while health hazards along with decreased food supply have become evident.

In order to function satisfactorily for all life forms, the earth must be in balance with all biotic and abiotic forces. But after 200 years of environmental exploitation, and as Colin Tudge put it in Time Before History, "Our political and economic institutions and philosophies are out of sync with the biological and physical realities of the planet."

One country, the United States of America, from 1890-1990, a mere century, consumed more natural resources than all mankind throughout known history.

Abuse of nature ultimately leads to stress and collapse and the cracks in our presumptuous human edifice are showing dramatically: Global warming and climate change, ozone depletion, an increase in ultra-violet radiation, population explosion, forest depletion, stagnation in basic food production, appearance of unknown diseases and reappearance of old ones, an increase in poverty and natural catastrophes; and all this is happening while natural resources and financial means are becoming scarce.

Now mankind is faced with its failed experiment of exploiting, controlling and dominating nature. "The party is over, the finishing post is in sight."

If Man desires to master the situation, he must devise new systems, both economic and political, and he has to approach the coming century with radically different motivations. Let's trash the old notion of Man as being the measure of everything, the master of the universe, the godlike creator and dominator.

We are enjoined to humbly accept our role as part of nature and partner to all other creatures. We are simply part of them, though presumably the most capable, and this may enable us to cope successfully with what lies ahead.

The first decades of the twenty-first century will be decisive for the sustainability of our civilisation. Sustainability has become a focus point in all political and development discussion. But without change, no sustainability can exist.

According to the Meadows computer models in "Beyond the Limits" only if we reduce population growth, practise an ecological economy, and use our technological skills for fighting synthetic emissions and further erosion of soils, will we thus manage to preserve our resources, only then will environmental pollution decrease, industrial output continue in sustainable measure, food production be assured for a slowly stabilising world population, and thus life expectancy and per capita shares of consumer goods, food and services will continue without decline into the twenty-second century.

If on the other hand, we neither change nor adjust we will be almost certainly led to decline, chaos and total collapse, beginning in 2020, twenty five years from today, and reaching disastrous levels by 2100.

Everyone in a leadership position knows this, but nothing serious nor broadly implemented is, heretofore, being done to bring about necessary change.

Why? The answer is equally acknowledged: Our present political and economic systems do not respond to the need of nature, but to the needs and aspirations of human beings only, they are aiming towards "the great good," the "Californian lifestyles," and this in spite of knowing that these are illusory objectives, only within the grasp of small minorities of elites.

Our environmental problems are man-made, they are the result of our scientific, industrial civilisation. It has performed admirably, but without calculation of the many side-effects, risks and long-term impacts on man and nature. Now that we are learning increasingly about these undesirable effects, we must make an effort to contain them.

Will we succeed? Certainly — if we address them sincerely and with the same will-power and energy mankind showed in bringing its civilisation to the crisis-zone, this is the threshold to which we are now crossing, step by step.

To be successful, science, economics and politics must act together. But politics must provide legal grounds and incentives, as well as global coordination of action.

We need primarily what is now being called "global governance." It implies that all nations cooperate responsibly and with accountability on national, regional and global levels to resolve problems which nation-states alone can no longer solve.

If we consider the United Nations as not having fully succeeded, it would imply a reform of the United Nation System, the establishment of respected international courts, including an environmental court, with power of correction and instruments of law enforcement, it means to abandon the widely symbolic representation of governments in the U.N. bodies in favour of responsible, law-abiding representation. And we also may need a second U.N.-chamber of NGO-representatives. We need to change "soft laws" into "hard laws," as signatures, promises and ethical vows have not worked satisfactorily.

Let us be realistic: There will be no global governance, no "one-world," no new "global ethics" if nation-states do not yield, in certain fields and under certain conditions, parts of their sovereignty. And the environment is one of these special fields as environmental threats, degradation and catastrophes don't recognise national borders.

Easier than in the political area, change may come in economic fields. Scientists and economists are usually more creative, more innovative, more daring.

The transition from our "industrial" economy to an "ecological" economy is already in the making, though still within a certain avant-garde only, and with small and hesitant steps.

The turn-over in "Environmental Technology" will in 1996 reach $426 billion. Not much. And the greater part, 74 per cent, is in services, 20 per cent in low technology and only 6 per cent in high technology. But the annual growth rate in this sector is 7.5 per cent.

What is demanded is a switch from control, remediation and clean-up technologies to preventive, waste-minimisation and energy-saving technologies. We need a completely new environmental technology, design-based on broad application of science to the entire production process; we need new ways to make products that waste less, that run more cleanly which last longer, and which, at the end, are recycled and reintroduced into the production process.

This means life-cycle planning of goods, and it can only be achieved by introducing a new way of economic thinking: We need ecological management.

Whereas the majority of economic enterprises merely comply with the minimal environmental requirements and legal obligations, more trying to avoid than to fulfill ecological norms, there are already hundreds and possibly thousands of companies which have integrated environmental considerations at the highest level of management and decision-making. The future will be in favour of green and clean technologies, as people start changing their consumption patterns, and as the notion spreads amongst producers and consumers, "that a product only is of high quality if it was produced according to ecological standards and if its use and disposal don't harm the environment." And in the future only products which comply with these ecological standards will be admitted to international trade.

Equally the oft-practised "systems of national accounts," the GNPs (gross national product), no longer reflect accurate measurements of economic performance. The depletion of national resources, the degradation of the environment and the enormously high costs of nature-rehabilitation are not entering the balance sheets; these costs are ignored and put into the accounts of future generations. In contrast, the defensive environmental costs of repairing and remediation are entering the GNPs as assets, whereas, in fact, they are unredeemable expenses.

Considering these, unaccounted and uncovered eco-costs, economic growth in most countries does not result in reducing shortages, increasing well-being and wealth for the potentially greatest amount of people.

The way out of this dilemma is through an economic policy of sustainability, the core of which comprises a strictly environmental resources management within the production processes, a radically new technology design based on less material input, less energy use, longevity and recycling, as well as concentration on pollution prevention technologies, instead of the costly and harming "end of the pipe" technologies, which are still effected globally.

Future economic well-being is only possible, within sustainable margins, by applying a new system of national accounting in which nature and environment are given proper consideration and an environmental accounting is made part of the economic balance-sheets.

Walter Rüdel

If you kill the hen: no more eggs — a well-known truth. But nature is unique and irreplaceable. If mankind goes on depleting, polluting and destroying nature, the material resources-basis of economic performance will be exhausted. Consequently, what is bad for the environment is also bad for the economy. Economists and politicians have to consider this truth.

Equally all should recognise that an environmental economy and further economic growth can go very well together. Momentum is forming that new jobs and high growth rates in the coming century will occur only in the environmental economic sector.

If we keep such an ecological economy growing we will also contain other environmental problems, including the most pressing ones: Further population growth, poverty and climate change. Economic prosperity leads to full integration of women, in all sectors of educational, professional and political life, and thus it favours the demographic transition: Population numbers will stabilise and slowly decline.

Somehow it was our human-centric philosophy and growth-obsessed economy which dragged us into the morass in which we now find ourselves. We have confidence that by making the right adjustments and changes, our intellectual prowess and our economic strength will propel us out again.

The writer is the representative of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation in Jordan and Lebanon. He contributed the above article to the Jordan Times to coincide with an international conference on "Eco-management in Industry and Trade" which will be held in Amman next month.

Army quits Karak; curfew is lifted

(Continued from page 1)

after Friday (Aug. 23) passed without incident except a peaceful demonstration demanding a reversal of the government's decision to increase the prices of bread and rechannel subsidies through a direct cash compensation system.

The situation in the south was contained and brought under control after His Majesty King Hussein held a series of meetings with senior leaders, political and tribal, as well as parliamentarians from the region.

Slogans heard during Friday's demonstration in Karak indicated that residents were still demanding the scrapping of the increase in the price of bread.

King Hussein and Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti have firmly rejected any reversal of the decision, which is part of the economic restructuring programme that Jordan is implementing in coordination with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Without the increases, Jordan would have been found to have faulted in its implementation of the restructuring programme. That would have led to serious difficulties for Jordan to handle its foreign debts and continue to receive international assistance to bridge its balance of payments deficit.

However, the King has hinted that other measures such as a wage increase to help the people was under consideration, but that any discussion on such issues could come only after complete normalcy has been restored throughout the Kingdom.

The riots in Karak on Aug. 16 led to an immediate decision by the King to terminate an extraordinary session of Parliament, which was supposed to have discussed several key legislation, including draft laws on the Jordan Press Association, the Jordan Radio and Television Corporation and the Jordan News Agency (Petra) and amendments to the Passports and Nationalities Law, the Civil Status Law, the Social Security Corporation Law and a law on universities, among others.

It was the second time in seven years that riots broke out in the south. In early 1989, residents of Karak and other southern towns rioted against an increase in the price of fuel, also under the economic restructuring programme.

Some detainees freed; party members held

(Continued from page 1)

arrested from their homes. It did not give a date for the arrests.

The Ansar Party said its secretary-general, Mohammad Faisal Majali, was arrested on Friday.

Officials have said that those who simply took part in the demonstrations in the south would not be prosecuted but those who incited violence and participated in the rampage against public and private property would be prosecuted.

Two journalists of Al Bilad weekly, chief editor Khaled Khasasbeh and reporter Taha Abu Reden, remained in detention on charges of "inciting sectarianism and dissension" under article 150 of the penal code by carrying "misleading and inaccurate" reports in the weekly. They were arrested on Sunday and are being held without bail for 15 days.

Also held was Rakan Saideh, who was arrested one day after the other two were detained. Mr. Saideh faces charges of "publishing reports that contradict national responsibility and respect for truth and incite violence and instigate crimes and sowing the seeds of hatred" under articles 8, 9 and 40 of the Press and Publications Law. He could be also charged with "inciting sectarianism and instigating conflict" under article 150 of the penal code.

The nature of charges against Mr. Tawara, the weekly's publisher, Mr. Hussein, reportedly an active supporter of the Jordan Arab Baath Party, and Mr. Rantissi of Al Ahali was not immediately known.

Iraqi diplomat asked to leave

(Continued from page 1)

status of a former "administrative clerk" at the embassy, Abbas Ali Hassan, who is no longer working for the mission. The embassy had, however, filed an application for the renewal of his residence permit in May.

"The Ministry of Interior has turned down the application and Mr. Hassan's residence permit will not be renewed," said the source. Mr. Hassan worked for the embassy for one year before he left the mission in May.

The Jordanian action on the diplomatic level was coupled with an announcement by the Ministry of Higher Education that it was refusing scholarships for Jordanian students to study in Iraq. The objective, sources explained, was to reduce the number of Jordanians living in Iraq. Unofficial estimates have put the number of Jordanian students in Iraq at between 4,000 and 4,500.

Informed sources also said that the manager of the Iraqi Rafidain Bank, Abdul Wahab Al Dalaeen, a Jordanian national, was arrested on charges that he had financed sabotage attempts in last week's riots in the south.

Assad restates commitment

(Continued from page 12)

and Gaza, the seat of the Palestinians' self-rule authority.

Japan's interest in Middle East politics was highlighted in February when it sent a military contingent to serve with the 1,000-strong United Nations Disengagement Observation Force on the Golan Heights. It was the first time that Japanese troops have taken in peacekeeping missions in the Middle East.

Mr. Ikeda visited the Japanese soldiers at the Golan Heights on Friday.

"Japan is aiming to find a peaceful settlement to the conflict in the Middle East," said a Japanese official accompanying the foreign minister.

King

(Continued from page 1)

The information minister said the government was fully committed to implementing the economic restructuring programme and the rechannelled form of subsidy introduced along with the increase in the prices of bread and fodder announced two weeks ago.

A ministerial committee is charged with ensuring the fair distribution of cash compensation in place of subsidy for bread, he said, adding that the compensation would reach all citizens in a few days.

The Ministry of Supply will set up direct phone lines for the public to address their complaints, he added.

Dr. Muasher said that Saturday's Cabinet session also discussed Jordan's information policy and particularly the Press and Publications Law, amendments will be introduced to the 1993 law to allow more press freedoms while also "raising the ceiling of responsibility," he said.

The King chaired part of the Cabinet session, which was earlier presided over by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti. Accompanying the King were Their Royal Highnesses Prince Hamzeh and Prince Hashem. Earlier in the day, Mr. Kabariti met with Lower House of Parliament Speaker Sa'd Hayel Srour and emphasised the need for continued cooperation between the executive and legislative authorities in order to pursue the implementation of the economic reform programme.

Mr. Kabariti said that the government remains committed to the contents of its policy statement to Parliament upon its inception.

THE JORDAN-JAPAN FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

The President and members of the association are pleased to salute and welcome in Jordan

H.E. Mr. Yukihiko Ikeda

Minister of Foreign Affairs in Japan

and to wish him a happy stay and successful visit. Japan's concerted efforts in supporting Jordan's economic progress, and encouraging the peace process are highly appreciated and acknowledged.

The association stands for closer and deeper mutual appreciation and cooperation between Jordan and Japan.

Netanyahu targets illegal foreign workers in Israel

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's government Friday considered for the first time ways to cut a growing dependence on foreign workers who have taken jobs which are off-limits to Palestinians and unwanted by Jews.

"We will act to reduce drastically the presence of illegal foreign workers as well as cut the scope of foreign labourers who enter the country with a permit," a cabinet statement quoted Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu as saying.

The communique said the cabinet would take a "practical decision" next week.

"We will propose expelling about 1,000 illegal foreign labourers from Israel a month." Labour and Welfare Minister Eli Ishai told Israel radio before Friday's debate.

But Mr. Ishai's plan was no blueprint for a mass exodus from Israel of workers from countries such as Romania, Thailand, Turkey and China who now do the low-paying manual labour of Palestinians barred from the Jewish state for security reasons.

It would take authorities more than eight years to expel all of the 100,000 foreigners he said were working in Israel without a permit — assuming police could round all of them up and no new illegal labourers slipped into the country.

Mr. Ishai said another 100,000 foreigners had valid work papers.

"There is a problem here. (hiring foreigners) pays — it is good for building contractors....We may have to keep a quota of foreign workers. The question is how many," Mr. Ishai said.

Many Israelis initially welcomed the blue-collar foreign influx at the height of the six-year-long Palestinian uprising that began in 1987, during the course of which Arabs knifed Jews in Israeli cities.

But while Israeli law required Palestinian workers to return to their homes in the occupied territories each evening, foreigners remain overnight in squalid housing.

"Go look at the old central bus station area (in Tel Aviv). It has all the things you see in the bronx," legislator Ran Cohen told the radio, comparing the foreign workers' slum area to the New York borough known for poverty and crime.

Mr. Cohen called for the establishment of "transit camps" to hold illegal immigrants for several days before expulsion, a proposal which his left-wing Meretz Party colleague Amnon Rubinstein said would hurt Israel's image.

"It won't be a concentration camp," Mr. Cohen snapped.

The cabinet communique quoted Mr. Netanyahu as saying that while "strong action" was needed to stop foreign workers staying in Israel illegally, "we are talking about human beings and therefore must treat them accordingly".

Israel's Channel Two television showed Thursday six Turkish workers locked in a shack on an Israeli farm by their employer, apparently over a financial dispute.

"It is just like a ghetto," said an incredulous police officer at the scene.

Nigerians cleaning apartments, Thais picking flowers in greenhouses, Chinese building workers and Filipina nannies have become permanent fixtures in the Jewish state.

The Palestinian National Authority has demanded Israel allow more of its people in to work, saying an Israeli closure had crippled the economy in the self-ruled areas.

Before the Palestinian uprising, as many as 160,000 Arabs from the West Bank and Gaza worked in Israel.

Israel sealed off the territories and stopped Palestinians from entering in February after the first in a series of suicide bombings that killed 59 people — including seven Romanian workers. Today some 30,000 Palestinians work in Israel.

Middle East/North Africa Partners Fund will be launched shortly

By George S. Hishmeh
USIA Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — The Middle East/North Africa Partners Fund, which is planning to make equity investments of $250 million in new and expanding businesses in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia, and the Palestinian self-rule areas, is expected to be launched before the upcoming Cairo economic summit in November.

"We are looking for a first close in late October or early November," according to Mona Aboelnaga, a vice-president at Siguler Guff & Company, the New York-based manager of the fund.

Ms. Aboelnaga, who was on her way to Cairo to attend an investment conference next week, added, "We have started looking at companies we are interested in" but she would not release any names.

Ms. Aboelnaga, an Egyptian-American who manages the fund's portfolio, revealed that her «MDBO»«MDNM» firm, formerly the private equity arm of Paine Webber's Mitchell Hutchins Institutional Investors, has raised to date about $140 million. "We will be up and running before the (Cairo) summit," she said.

Ms. Aboelnaga seemed confident that the remaining amount — $110 million — would be raised shortly after the three-day Cairo summit, scheduled to start on November 12.

The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), an independent U.S. government agency, is providing an investment guaranty to support the privately capitalised and privately managed fund.

The New York firm will manage the fund with local advisors serving in each of the five areas. The local advisors are Investments & Securities Group (Egypt), Casablanca Finance Group (Morocco), TunInvest Finance Group (Tunisia), and the Cairo Amman Bank (Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza).

Of the $250 million, $50 million will be co-managed by Illinois-based Grove Financial Services, Inc. to target investments in Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza.

Ms. Aboelnaga said that 51 per cent of the investors must be Americans while the remainder could be non-Americans including Arab financiers.

According to a fact sheet issued by OPIC, "the fund will invest in companies that have business relationships with U.S. companies and will pursue investments that will use products and equipment manufactured in the United States and/or employ the services of American firms."

OPIC said examples of the sectors in which the fund could make investments are consumer products, high technology, pharmaceutical, telecommunications and financial services.

"By providing capital to new and expanding business and supporting privatisation in the Middle East and North Africa," the OPIC fact sheet added, "the fund expects to expand the private sector which will improve business efficiency and create employment opportunities for local citizens."

According to Ms. Aboelnaga, 25 per cent of the fund is "pure equity" and the remainder are bonds which OPIC will guarantee. The fund will be paying investors 0.75 per cent above U.S. treasury bonds, now yielding about 7 per cent.

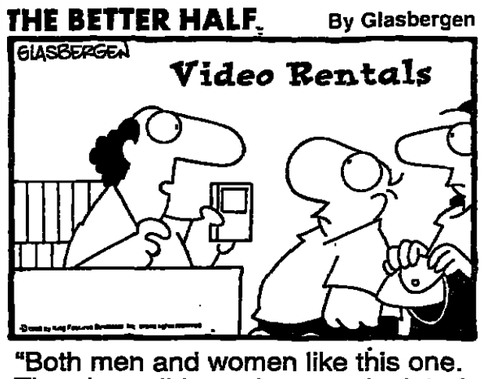
The MENA Partners are so-called because they are in fact four funds, each with a term of ten years, which may be extended for up to two additional one-year periods, if necessary "to facilitate an orderly exit out of investments."

The funds have four initial target capitalisations: Egyptian Partners ($100 million), Tunisia Partners ($50 million), Morocco Partners ($50) and Jordan/Palestine Partners ($50).

According to Siguler Guff & Company, the four funds are seeking commitments from accredited investors for $250 million of units consisting of $62.5 million of Limited Partnership interests and $187.5 million of notes. The investors will subscribe pro rata across all the four funds based on initial target capitalisations.

Payment of principal and interest on the notes, a fact sheet from the managers said, will be "irrevocably guaranteed" by OPIC. In other words, it explained investors in the "units" are thereby assured of receiving a return of at least 75 per cent of their invested capital plus interest.

THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



"Both men and women like this one. There's a wild car chase and a lot of explosions, then they all talk about it."

Clinton signs law to reform welfare

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Even as President Bill Clinton signed a law to partially dismantle a 1930s-era social safety net, the White House tried to avert political damage within his Democratic Party with counter-measures for the poor.

"Today we are ending welfare as we know it," Mr. Clinton said at a signing ceremony at the White House Rose Garden, recalling his oft-cited 1992 campaign promise.

Mr. Clinton was flanked by Democratic and Republican lawmakers and former welfare recipients as he signed a law that drastically revamps a social assistance programme that ends the 61-year-old federal welfare "entitlement" for the poor.

In response to criticism from his allies over the measure, Mr. Clinton conceded that the legislation was "far from perfect but it has come a very long way."

Mr. Clinton had vetoed two previous welfare reforms as too extreme.

The previous bills "failed to protect our children and did too little to move people from welfare to work," Mr. Clinton said.

The new law, however, includes provisions that the Clinton administration opposes such as deep cuts in nutritional programmes and a drastic reduction in benefits for legal immigrants.

"We strongly disagree with a couple of provisions of this bill (but) we can change what is wrong," he said.

The president said that despite the shortcomings of the law, it will recreate "the nation's social bargain with the poor."

Many Democrats are not convinced.

The measure has sparked vociferous opposition from the Democratic Party's liberal wing, including women's groups and advocates of child protection.

Republicans, meanwhile, were trying to take credit from the measure away from Mr. Clinton, noting the president had vetoed two earlier welfare-reform bills.

While liberal voters are not likely to chastise Mr. Clinton with a vote for Mr. Dole — whose party sponsored the welfare reform bill — they could hurt the president's reelection bid by staying home.

But Thomas Mann, an expert on the presidency at the Brookings Institution, said the welfare bill is "popular in the country as a whole," and analysts routinely describe Mr. Clinton's decision to sign it as a net positive in pure political terms.

Mr. Clinton seems to have preferred to anger his liberal allies rather than alienate moderate voters and give Mr. Dole new ammunition against him.

The law ends federal cash assistance to needy families, places a five-year lifetime cap on aid for most people, and requires able-bodied recipients go to work within two years to keep receiving the help.

The law also trims nutrition allotments, or "food stamps," and slashes benefits for most non-citizens.

But already, the administration is taking steps to soften the blow to the poor, giving some states permission to by-pass some of the law's toughest provisions and plans to launch a programme of tax initiatives for inner-city businesses to promote job creation for the poverty-stricken urban areas.

More than 12 million Americans currently receive federal welfare assistance.

JUMBLE® THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

RATIE

ENCAP

ULDDEC

PRULAB

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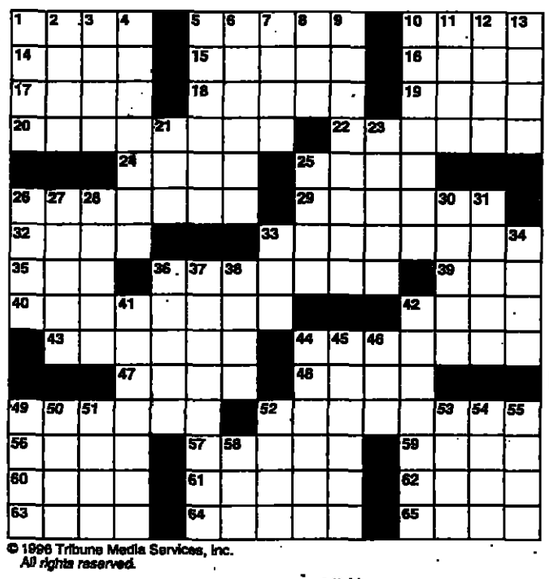
Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here :

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: SLANT SEIZE CHISEL UNEASY
Answer: The successful perfume maker had — SCENTS SENSE

THE Daily Crossword by Norma Steinberg



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ACROSS
1 Hot tubs
5 Las Vegas main street
10 Hourglass filling
14 Word on a door
15 Instant
16 "Now — me down to sleep..."
17 Song from Placido
18 Leader
19 Alaskan city
20 Maris to Mantle
22 In a chair
24 Trail
25 Dad's sister
26 Asian temples
29 Indian fabric
32 Dairy case choice
33 Vacation home
35 Reason for overtime
36 — glass
39 "— Maria"
40 Meetings
42 Forehead
43 Necessary
44 Lifetime pursuits
47 Refuse
48 Spoken
49 Fleet of warships
52 Like an amoeba?
56 Castle defense
57 Reputation
59 Heavenly hat?
60 Axlike tool
61 Fernando or Lorenzo
62 Ellipse
63 Obey
64 Perfume
65 Cucumber, e.g.

DOWN
1 Tiff
2 Immaculate
3 Europe's neighbor
4 Beauty parlor item
5 Layers
6 "We hold these —..."
7 Annoy
8 Rink surface
9 Talk into
10 Ol' Blue Eyes
11 Thanks —!
12 Point out
13 Colored
21 Furious
23 Concluded
25 Despot Idi —
26 Kitchen items
27 Sigourney Weaver movie
28 Barnyard honkers
30 Cognizant
31 Taste
33 That guy's
34 Evergreen shrubs
36 Took up one's cause
37 Pedicure targets
38 Opie's dad
41 Calmed, in a way
42 Hotel lobby figure
44 "—'s Bluff" (film)
45 Collar
46 Battering —
49 Oriental nanny
50 Traveled
51 Labyrinth
52 Notoriety
53 Roof overhang
54 Sharp blow
55 Fly alone
58 Unknown guy

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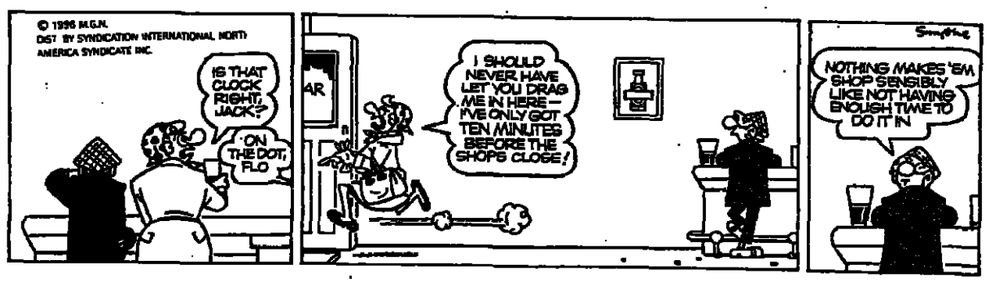
Peanuts

Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY AUGUST 25 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You feel both annoyed and unhappy today, so don't manipulate others or make any drastic moves you may regret in the days ahead by such an attitude. Later this evening will be good for you to get some project completed.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) You feel tied down to old conditions today and you want to make drastic changes which are not wise, so calm down and contemplate some new course of action. This evening will provide you with some much deserved relaxation.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Some personal ambitions have been yours for some time and suddenly today and you want to drift off to something else which you feel will be more prosperous and profitable, however, you should reconsider this action before proceeding.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) It would be wise to stay at home today and avoid difficulties which could be present and wait until another day which will be more beneficial. Enjoy your loved ones more later this evening and be happy in their company.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is not a day today to make changes or go off on a trip which you would later regret. Be leery of new contacts later this evening with ideas for your progress since they are only looking out for themselves.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You could easily be too demanding with your mate or a good close friend today, so use caution to avoid estrangement. Later this evening you can have some fun recreational activities with your loved ones.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A fellow associate could be too demanding today, so turn a deaf ear, however, say nothing which is disruptive and you can avoid a disagreement with this individual. Tonight you can stay at home with your loved ones and relax for the coming week.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't disagree about career activities you want to get away from today and simply vacate yourself, since others are demanding and want you to take over the responsibility all by yourself. Tonight you can complete some new project.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You feel you want a different type of recreation today, however, be careful it is not too expensive or you could find yourself in the situation of not having sufficient funds for your everyday necessities of life.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) If you are annoyed today, don't show it at home or a big disagreement could ensue between yourself and a loved one which could have serious repercussions. Take a health treatment and feel better for the days ahead.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Be most careful in motion today while on the highway and avoid a possible accident which you would rather not get involved with at this time. Try not to be too critical of others or you could get on their bad side.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Be careful not to take on any heavy responsibilities today which could cause you much loss in not only business but financial matters. Make the evening happy by spending it with your loved ones at home and simply relax.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

Saudi airline polishes image, restructures

DUBAI (R) — Flag carrier Saudi Arabian Airlines Corp. is polishing up its image and restructuring its organisation to turn the Middle East's biggest airline into an attractive commercial operation ahead of eventual privatisation.

The 51-year-old state firm has a new corporate identity and a fresh coat of paint on its fleet. It has hired image and management consultants and decided on a new name — Saudi Arabian Airlines, no longer Saudia.

The oldest and biggest Arab Gulf carrier, with 12.5 million passengers annually, is spending $6 billion on 61 new state-of- the-art U.S. aircraft. Deliveries are due to start in 1997.

It has promised better service on board its current 109- strong fleet and vowed to turn the losses suffered for more than a decade, mainly due to subsidised fares, to profits.

"We are now making a new start embracing every aspect of the airline's operation, aims, strategies, plans and programmes, fleet and route network," Director General Khaled Ben Bakr said, unveiling the carrier's new corporate identity in July.

"We have restructured our organisation to make it more dynamic...with rapid response to market demands and customers' needs, able to work on a commercial basis," he said.

Service on board the Saudia is similar to that on other airlines. "It is pretty standard, but there aren't too many frills," said one business traveller.

Commercialisation is seen tied to a larger private sector role, which Saudi Arabia says in its five-year development plan to 2000 is one of the transport sector's top priorities.

"Saudia is going to do it professionally and by the book. They are really trying to gain the confidence of the public so people will elect to fly on Saudia as a first choice and, if the opportunity arises, people will invest in Saudia," said leading Saudi economist Ihsan Bu Hulaiga.

"They have decided to operate Saudia as a business and the top man is an ex-professor and is systematic," he said.

Mr. Ben Bakr joined Saudia in 1994 from King Fahd University.

"They are commercialising and preparing for privatisation," said a Saudi analyst of the airline with projected revenue and spending of 8.48 billion riyals ($2.26 billion) this year.

"But things take time. As Prince Sultan said they first must make it profitable and attractive to investors," he said.

Last October, Saudi Arabia signed the $6 billion contract for Boeing Co. and McDonnell Douglas Corp. jets. At the time, Saudi defence and aviation minister, Prince Sultan said the deal was important "because we are going to privatise it soon."

But analysts say privatisation is still some years off and will probably not occur until the new fleet has been paid off.

"It will be gradual. They will probably privatise some supporting services and outsource some activities to contractors. Later on...shares in Saudia will probably be sold to the (Saudi) public," said Mr. Buhulaiga.

He said one likely option was to split up the organisation into independent companies of various specialisations. The companies could then be offered separately to the the public.

Analysts said the carrier had the tricky task of getting a balance between providing reasonably-priced domestic airfares in the kingdom — where cities are scattered over a 2.2 million square kilometres (850,000 square miles) area — with showing a profit.

"The airline still has an important socio-political role," said an economist based in the kingdom, where a generous welfare system has been in place since the early oil boom years.

"No figures are given but one can infer that Saudia has negative cashflow, hence the continuous support of the government," said one analyst, adding easy repayment terms for jet fuel was another form of government support.

Industry executives say up to 70 per cent of the airline's operations are domestic and 30 per cent international, but almost three-quarters of income is generated on international routes.

"Domestic flights are cheap. It costs about $30 from here (Dhahran) to Riyadh (380 kilometres or 230 miles away)," said one.

Last year's 10 per cent increase in economy class and 20 per cent rise in first class fares to its 25 domestic stations is a start, but analysts see the 52 international routes remaining the major profit-earners, helped with the new long-range fleet.

"Saudi Arabia is strategically located, it is the site of Muslim holy places which millions of people visit every year. The local population is huge and is growing fast, which must be good for the future of the airline," one explained.

The population of about 18 million, six million of whom are expatriates, is forecast to grow at 3.0-4.0 per cent until 2000.

"If it wants to prosper and to survive Saudia needs to compete domestically and outside," said Mr. Buhulaiga, adding airlines in the region needed to join forces among themselves and with foreign operators, and enter into code-sharing alliances.

He said he expected the domestic Saudi market, where the airline has a monopoly, to open to competition in 10-15 years.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 24/08/1996

	PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
	250.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	12.1	1.58	15	760	160720	221.50	222.00	.50+
	1.310	.880	MID.EAST INV.BK.	59.1	0.00	2	5000	4500	.90	.90	-
	3.040	2.600	JOR.KUWAIT BANK	19.4	0.00	3	152	407	2.68	2.68	-
	1.240	.890	JOR.GULF BANK	5.4	7.68	9	5614	5094	.91	.91	-
	4.180	3.300	JOR.ISLAMIC BANK	16.9	0.00	7	3339	11688	3.50	3.51	.01+
	4.120	3.000	JOR.INV.FIN.BANK	16.2	0.00	2	2021	6061	3.00	3.00	-
	1.090	.240	AMMAN BANK INV.	g	0.00	13	11950	2988	.25	.25	-
	1.680	1.000	PHILADEL.INV.BK.	g	0.00	2	600	666	1.11	1.11	-
	BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 173.40	%CHG: +0.17	58	29484	200287			
	3.380	2.800	JORDAN INSURANCE	12.6	5.10	1	2000	5880	2.80	2.94	.14+
	2.680	2.000	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	7.5	8.00	2	750	1476	2.05	2.00	.05-
	INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 121.72	%CHG: +1.39	3	2750	7356			
	1.900	1.450	JOR.ELECTRIC PWR.	10.5	7.89	18	9528	14478	1.53	1.52	.01-
	2.500	2.180	HIMMEH MINERALS	11.5	5.96	1	100	235	2.35	2.35	-
	6.050	4.650	ARAB INTL.HOTELS	16.1	3.16	4	383	1824	4.80	4.75	.05
	2.170	1.000	NATL. PORTFOLIO	g	0.00	4	13790	15943	1.16	1.15	.01
	2.460	1.790	MID. EAST HOTELS	79.3	0.00	1	15100	27704	1.89	1.84	.05-
	1.380	.960	ZARKA EDUCATION	g	0.00	3	1400	1403	1.01	1.00	.01-
n	1.200	.820	UNION LAND DEV.	E	0.00	2	300	275	.91	.91	-
	SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 110.60	%CHG: -0.54	35	40562	61970			
	26.630	18.950	JOR.TOBACCO & CIG.	18.4	3.79	4	564	12876	24.00	22.80	1.20-
	3.770	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	18.7	3.06	20	5060	16535	3.27	3.27	-
	3.650	2.710	JOR.PHOSPHATE MINES	29.8	0.00	4	986	2732	2.77	2.77	-
	5.960	4.780	ARAB POTASH CO.	15.7	3.85	2	298	1546	5.20	5.20	-
	10.550	8.720	JOR. PETROL.REFINERY	9.4	8.60	14	1623	16052	9.29	9.30	.01+
	7.600	7.000	JORDAN TANNING	7.6	8.07	2	237	1679	7.10	7.10	-
	5.100	3.100	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	19.7	5.59	6	565	1989	3.61	3.58	.03-
	6.450	5.650	JOR.CERAMIC IND.	7.3	4.26	2	139	813	5.92	5.87	.05-
	2.560	1.710	JOR.PIPES MANFCT.	9.5	6.98	2	225	307	1.74	1.72	.02
	4.050	3.150	JOR.PAPER CARDBD.	16.7	3.08	4	274	070	3.25	3.25	
	3.310	2.500	GENERAL MINING	7.4	10.34	2	2650	7685	2.90	2.90	
↓	13.750	10.600	ARAB CHEM. DTRGEN.	28.0	2.93	2	600	6105	10.60	10.25	.35-
	8.000	4.250	DAR ALDAWA DV.INV.	12.5	4.38	2	600	2742	4.65	4.57	.08-
	9.800	3.130	ARAB ALUM.IND.	8.8	8.77	11	1750	5978	3.44	3.42	.02-
	.740	.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	q	0.00	25	33500	16415	.49	.49	-
	1.500	1.060	ARAB PAPER CONV.TRD.	8.4	8.35	2	560	682	1.29	1.24	.05-
	1.210	.660	NATIONAL INDS.	10.2	8.70	5	3850	2671	.70	.69	.01-
	2.080	1.060	INTERMED.PETRO.CHEM.	g	0.00	9	2200	2537	1.18	1.15	.03-
↓	3.550	2.540	UNIV.CHEM.INDS.	66.6	0.00	1	150	378	2.60	2.52	.08-
	4.700	2.650	NATL.CABLE WIRE.MFAC	17.7	0.00	3	950	2755	2.95	2.90	.05-
	1.600	.830	JOR. SULPHO-CHEM	g	0.00	3	2500	2223	.89	.89	-
	2.180	1.080	ARAB PHARM.CHEM.	27.3	0.00	20	5162	7581	1.50	1.46	.04-
	1.820	1.060	KAWTHER INVEST.	51.4	4.20	7	1600	2201	1.39	1.43	.04+
	3.300	1.760	UNIV. MODN.INDS.	5.7	10.98	1	1000	1890	1.89	1.89	-
	2.100	1.140	JOR. INDS.RESOURCES	17.2	0.00	7	30700	42946	1.39	1.37	.02-
	1.740	.950	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	26.9	0.00	3	700	693	.99	.99	
	2.460	1.750	EL -ZAY READY WEAR	P	0.00	1	350	648	1.87	1.85	.02
	1.490	1.090	INTL. TOBACCO	27.1	0.00	1	200	230	1.16	1.15	.01-
	2.120	1.130	UNION CH. & VEG.	29.1	0.00	3	500	590	1.20	1.18	.02-
	INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 106.97	%CHG: -0.21	168	99473	161428			
	GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 139.54	%CHG: -0.01	264	172289	431039			

PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 24/08/1996

	HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE
	.810	.620	JOR.TRADE FAC.	16.6	0.00	4	2250	1418	.63	.63	-
n	.950	.440	NATL.COMMER.CENTERS	E	0.00	5	1750	878	.53	.50	.03-
	.960	.700	UNION INV. 50%	69.8	0.00	3	118500	27930	.74	.73	.01-
	1.200	.520	ARAB FIN.INVEST.	q	0.00	20	21015	11998	.57	.55	.02-
	.640	.340	JOR.INDS.MATCH-JEMCO	g	0.00	1	4000	1840	.45	.46	.01+
	.970	.510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	E	0.00	10	3650	2347	.64	.67	.03+
↓n	1.100	.620	NATL.MULT.ENG.NAMICO	E	0.00	14	31000	18631	.63	.60	.03-
	1.080	.770	JORDAN STEEL	E	0.00	1	1000	780	.78	.78	
	.840	.440	ARAB ELECT.INDS.	P	0.00	2	1350	608	.45	.45	-
	.940	.520	MIDEAST PHARM. 75%	E	0.00	9	14150	5246	.64	.62	.02-
	.850	.440	INDS. ENG.	33.3	0.00	1	100	54	.54	.54	-
	1.460	.770	INDS. CERAMIC	E	0.00	2	1050	820	.78	.78	-
P	1.500	.530	MID.EAST COMPLEX	8.1	0.00	19	10350	7142	.70	.69	.01-
	GRAND TOTAL					100	208890	80692			

↓ : New 12 months low
n : Listed during the past 12 months
P : P/E ratio is 100 or more
g : Negative P/E
E : Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year

Daily Business

A review of news from the Arabic press

Only 45 women are in key administrative posts in civil service

** OUT OF 1,200 women holding administrative jobs in the Jordanian civil service, only 45 women are in leading posts, Abdullah Ulayyan, secretary general of the Civil Service Commission, said in a lecture. He added that "we have succeeded in implementing international policies in developing the administrative system except the participation of women in administrative decision-making."

Dr. Ulayyan stressed that Jordan's administrative system had not yet reached the stage of inefficiency according to international standards but he admitted that there was a disproportionate distribution of employees. He noted that although there was overstaffing at some institutions and shortages at others, the general administrative system was still over the dangerous red line.

The lecturer told his audience at the Amman Rotary Club that the government had taken many decisions that would ensure building up an efficient and capable administrative system. "We are marching on the right track," he emphasised.

Dr. Ulayyan gave an indication of the job market by pointing out that, at present, there are 124,000 people seeking jobs. He said that the number of government employees had reached 139,000 of whom 39 per cent are in Amman. The Ministry of Education alone employs 65,000 people and another 20,000 are employed by the Ministry of Health with the remaining 54,000 employed by all other ministries and government departments, he added.

The secretary-general criticised the evaluation process at some institutions and noted that at one ministry, 87 per cent of the employees received the "excellent" mark in their annual performance assessments (Al Ra'i).

ABI shareholders ask Central Bank to stop sale to Arab Bank

** THE MAJORITY of Amman Bank for Investment (ABI) shareholders have demanded a halt to the deal being worked out by the Central Bank to sell ABI to the Arab Bank. At a meeting Wednesday night, 10,310 ABI shareholders accounting for 73 per cent of the ownership, a committee was formed to torpedo the proposed sale. The small shareholders who are being kept in the dark over the details of the deal, entrusted the committee to write to the Central Bank governor demanding clarifications of the issue and a meeting of the ABI general assembly.

The shareholders were concerned about the delay in publishing the 1995 balance sheet amid reports that ABI has accumulated over JD 9 million in losses. They agreed to ask the Central Bank to keep ABI running by restructuring its capital and preparing a structural adjustment programme.

During the meeting, the shareholders demanded to know the reason for the bank's collapse and those who were responsible for that. They requested an inquiry and wondered why the Central Bank did not act in the early stages to support ABI. Finally, the shareholders demanded that they be given full account of the situation to safeguard their investments and interests (Al Ra'i).

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates — Prices as at 24/08/96 19:54

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.4785	0.6425	1.1930	108.25	1.3703	1509.47	1.6565	5.0525
DE Mark	0.6764	-	0.4343	0.8068	73.21	0.9265	1020.60	1.1203	3.4167
GB Sterling	1.5565	1.5565	-	1.8643	168.38	2.1329	2349.49	2.5783	7.8642
CH Franc	0.8382	123.88	0.5381	-	90.71	1.1481	1264.74	138.63	4.2333
JP Yen	0.0092	1.3652	0.5930	1.1016	-	1.2653	13.94	152.95	4.6653
CA Dollar	0.7298	1.0848	0.4695	0.8774	1.27	-	1104.75	1.2175	3.6987
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9792	0.4254	0.0790	1396.26	0.9076	-	10.97	3.3463
NL Guilder	0.6037	89.23	0.3876	72.01	65.30	0.8270	910.97	-	3.0492
FR Franc	0.1979	0.2926	0.1271	23.6097	21.40	0.2712	32.78	32.7800	-

Energy

Oils	Last	Previous
Brent	21.35	21.75
W. Texas	22.15	22.40
Bony	21.35	21.75
Dubai	18.88	18.40
UL Gas	208.00	208.00

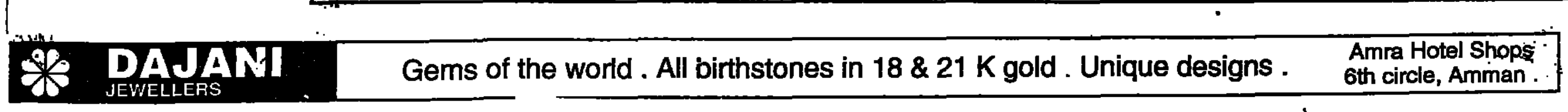
Mid-East Currencies

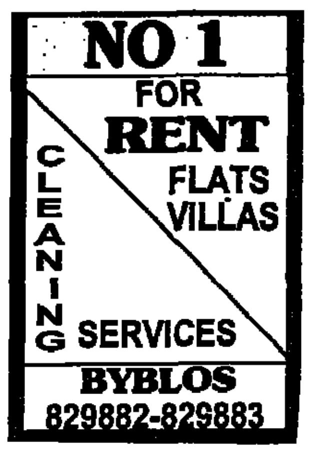
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.3944	0.17131	0.31823	28.8767
AE Dirham	0.2724	0.40284	0.17499	0.32508	29.4977
KW Dinar	3.3417	4.94315	2.14684	3.98883	361.925
BH Dinar	0.3770	3.92311	1.70418	3.16556	287.274
CY Pound	2.1738	3.214	1.3961	2.5933	235.314

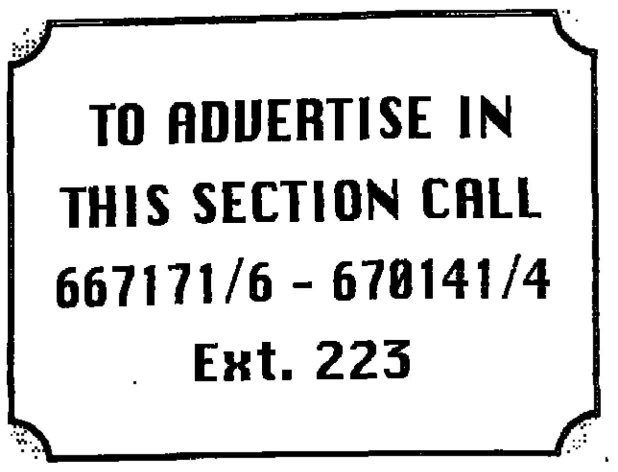
Main Equity Indicies

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls
NewYork	DOW JONES	5722.74	-10.73	-0.19	5739.02	5700.92	5733.47
Newyork	S&P 500	667.03	-3.65	-0.54	670.68	664.93	670.68
London	FT-SE 100	0	0	0	0	0	3907.5
Tokyo	NIKKIE 225	21228.8	-134.44	-0.63	21398	21188.2	21363.2
Paris	CAC 40	2020.82	3.06	0.15	2022.52	2008.43	2017.76
Frankfurt	DAX	2556.16	-2.1	-0.08	2561.75	2555.08	2557.26

JORDAN MARKETPLACE







Out-of-sorts Newcastle crash 2-1 at home against Wednesday

LONDON (R) — New-castle's early season teething problems continued Saturday when they lost 2-1 at home to Premier League pacesetters Sheffield Wednesday.

England striker Alan Shearer gave Kevin Keegan's talent-laden side the lead from the penalty spot after 13 minutes after Wednesday's Yugoslav Dejan Stefanovic pulled down Colombian forward Faustino Asprilla.

But two minutes later Wednesday equalised through Peter Atherton, who found space in the penalty area to meet Mark Pembridge's free kick with a precise glancing header.

Guy Whittingham stole three points for the Yorkshire side with a goal 10 minutes from time.

To add to Newcastle's misery, England striker Les Ferdinand was stretchered off in the second half.

Wednesday, who escaped relegation on the final day of last season, have now won their first three games of the season.

Elsewhere, title hopefuls Liverpool were held 0-0 at home by newly-promoted Sunderland, and in London, the tie between Tottenham Hotspur and Everton also ended goaless.

Frenchman Frank Leboeuf and Italian Gianluca Vialli scored their first Premier League goals as Chelsea beat Coventry 2-0, and managerless Arsenal won by the same scoreline at Leicester.

Last season's league and cup winners Manchester United host 1995 champions Blackburn Sunday.

Newcastle, who beat Wimbledon 2-0 in midweek, had the better of the first half at St. James' Park, with Asprilla in sparkling form.

But the defensive frailties which cost them the title last season were again apparent and Wednesday's buoyant forwards were given plenty of space in front of goal.

Fielding new Dutch signing Orlando Trustful, David Pleat's side were organised at the back and dangerous on the break, and twice came close to scoring through trainee Richie Humphreys, looking for his third goal in as many matches.

The clash looked to be heading for a draw when Whittingham snatched the winner to the anguish of the majority of the 36,000-strong crowd.

Newcastle, who have spent in excess of £60 million ($93 million) in building their side over the past four years, have now lost two of their first three league games and were hammered 4-0 by Manchester United in the Charity Shield.

Last year they lost out to United in the race for the title after squandering a 12-point lead in the last five months of the season.

Wednesday, who beat League Cup holders Aston Villa and Yorkshire rivals Leeds in their first two outings, head the fledgling Premier League table on nine points from Ruud Gullit's Chelsea on seven.

Chelsea, packed full of European imports this season, took the lead against Coventry in controversial style when the referee failed to spot an apparent handball by midfielder Dan Petrescu.

The Romanian ignored the protests from the visiting defenders, took off down the wing and crossed for Leboeuf to head home.

The Coventry players continued to complain and defender Liam Daish, who had already been booked for a late challenge, was sent off for dissent.

Middlesbrough came away with a 1-1 draw from Nottingham Forest thanks to a goal made and executed by their Brazilians.

Emerson picked up the ball in midfield, carved a way through the home defence and crossed for Juninho, who struck the ball past goalkeeper Mark Crossley from the edge of the box.

Veteran England leftback Stuart Pearce equalised for Forest with a typically fierce free kick.

Arsenal, who sacked manager Bruce Rioch five days before the start of the season, put their boardroom disputes behind them to win 2-0 at Leicester thanks to goals from Dutch forward Dennis Bergkamp and out-of-favour England striker Ian Wright.

Bergkamp scored from the penalty spot in the first half and Wright came off the substitute's bench to seal the Gunners' victory with a strike in the final minute.

Aston Villa, who finished fourth in the league last season, recorded their second consecutive win, beating promoted Derby 2-0.

Kenya's Julius Chelule (right) and teammate Kipkurui Misoi celebrate the men's 3,000m steeplechase final at the World Junior Athletics Championships in Sydney Saturday. Chelule won the race in a time of 8 minutes and 33.09 seconds beating Misoi who finished second in at time of 8 minutes and 33.31 seconds (Reuter photo)

Obikwelu makes 100-200m double triumph

SYDNEY(AFP) — Nigerian sprinter Francis Obikwelu repeated Ato Boldon's feat of a golden 100m-200m sprint double at the IAAF World Junior Athletics Championship, but that won't change his mind on reverting to 400m next year.

Obikwelu, the dominant sprinter here this week, smashed the 200m field Saturday to equal the championship record with a blistering 20.47 seconds to beat South African Riaan Dempers and American Bryan Harrison.

Seventeen-year-old Obikwelu, a member of the Nigerian 100m relay team at this month's Atlanta Olympics, beat his teammate Seun Ogunkoya to take gold in 10.21 seconds Thursday.

Yet despite Portugal-based Obikwelu's slashing form over the short sprints, he sees his future over the one lap of 400m running.

"Right now I'm really good at the 200m, but not so good at the 400m, but I'm a 400m runner and I am gearing myself towards the 400m at the 2000 Sydney Olympics," said Obikwelu.

"After I was beaten in the semifinals of the 400m at the last World Junior Championships in Portugal, my coach put me in the 100-200m races to sharpen my speed and endurance for the 400m."

Obikwelu is also facing a decision as whether to take out Portuguese nationality, but gave few clues at his press conference.

"I haven't decided whether to take up Portuguese nationality," he said.

"I'm very glad to be a Nigerian, my parents are living there, but I went to Portugal for some training and to improve my times.

"To train in Nigeria is very hard so that's why I went to Portugal to train because the weather is very nice, it's not too cold there."

Four years ago in Seoul, Trinidad's Boldon claimed the 100m-200m double and then went on to become a dual sprint bronze medallist at the Atlanta Olympics behind Donovan Bailey in the 100m and Michael johnson in the 200m.

Sylvianne Felix claimed France's first gold medal at the championship with a popular victory in the 200m.

Cheered on by a vociferous group of 80 compatriots, here as winners of a lottery promotion, Felix beat home Australian Lauren Hewitt and 100m champion Nora Ivanova of Bulgaria to win in a personal best 23.16 seconds.

"Right now I don't know if I will be running in the 200m or 400m in the future."

France has the premier women's sprinter with Marie-Jose Perec, winner of the 200m-400m double at the Atlanta games.

Kenya continued their dominance of the 3,000m steeplechase with a one-two finish in Saturday's final. Julius Chelule took gold in the year's best junior time of 8 minutes 33.09 seconds from Kipkurui Misoi.

It was Kenya's fifth straight win in the steeplechase at the World Juniors and earlier this month at Atlanta Joseph Keter and Moses Kipianui took gold-silver in the Olympic event.

Russia won two golds, a silver and a bronze on the fourth day of competition.

Irina Stankina, disqualified while contesting the lead halfway through the 10 kilometre walk at the Atlanta Olympics, cleared out to win the 5,000m walk by more than 20 seconds from compatriot Olga Panferova in 21:31.85.

Australian Natalie Saville crossed the line third but heard of her disqualification as she was on her celebration lap draped in the national flag before her home supporters. Romanian Claudia Iovan was promoted to third.

Elizaveta Chalygina won Russia's second gold in the heptathlon with 5.711 points from Finland's Johanna Halkoaho and Hana Dolezelova of the Czech Republic.

Elsewhere, Canadian Mark Boswell took out the high jump with a best effort of 2.24 metres. Poland's Maciej Palyszko claimed the hammer throw with 71.24m. Rene Luis Hernandez won the triple jump for Cuba with 16.50m and China's Song Ferma captured the shot put with 16.58m.

Kenyan Noah Ngeny shaded Algerian Miloud Abaoub as the fastest qualifier heading into Sunday's 1,500m final. Ngeny won his semifinal in 3:42.48 with Abaoub five-hundredths of a second slower.

Syrian wins horse show jumping tournament

AMMAN (J.T.) — Syria's Yasser Sharif won the first prize of the Royal International Horse Show Jumping Competition held at the Arabian Horse Club Friday.

With this win the Syrian team monopolised the championship titles by winning the Amra Competition Cup, Speed And Skill Competition, won by Shadi Ghareeb, and the Grand Prix Cup.

Jordan's Hani Bisharat came second in the Grand Prix Competition, riding Carlo, and Hussam Baho, riding Casino, came fourth.

In the Amra Competition which consisted of two stages. Twenty-five jockeys participated and only three made it to the final stage in which Syria's Sharif came first with 48,04 seconds, Bisharat was second with 41,02 seconds and eight errors and Syria's Manal Jada'an in the third place with 46,49 seconds and eight errors.

In the Speed And Skill Competition Syria's Shadi Ghareeb overtook Qatar's Sheikh Ali Althani to win the first place with 55 seconds, leaving Sheikh Ali in the second place with 56,84 seconds. Yasser Sharief came third with 59,72 seconds and Ibrahim Bisharat with 60,90 seconds took the fourth place.

Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein, president of the Royal Jordanian Equestrian Federation, presented the winners with trophies and prizes.

Inquiry begins after 1 dies in 1,000 Lakes Rally crash

JYVASKYLA, Finland (R) — Finnish police promised Saturday a full inquiry after a spectator was killed and 31 injured in an accident at the start of the world championship 1,000 Lakes Rally.

Police stressed that normal safety precautions had been taken while some experts blamed driver error for the death of the 45-year-old unnamed Belgian after a competing car ploughed into the crowd Friday evening.

"It was a flagrant driver mistake," Kari Sohlberg, a Finnish member of the sport's governing International Automobile Federation, said on television.

A car driven by Dane Karsten Richardt went into the crowd of onlookers during the opening two-kilometre stage held on closed public roads in the host city of Jyvaskyla.

The rally was stopped after the accident but the four-day event resumed Saturday.

"We are going to make a group investigation," a police spokesman said. He said police had made the usual course checks before the rally and approved safety arrangements.

The crowd was standing at least 60 metres from the road when the Mitsubishi of Richardt and his co-driver Ole Frederiksen skidded down an escape road into the cordoned-off viewing area.

The two Danes were shocked but they were believed to be not seriously injured. They both made statements to police soon after the crash.

Twelve people were still in hospital Saturday, two with serious injuries including a second Belgian, but doctors said their condition was stable.

Police said they would begin a thorough check of Richardt's car later Saturday. The spokesman could not say how long the inquiry would take.

"Everything seemed to be in order to make the race possible," Simo Lampinen, head of the organising committee, was quoted as saying in the daily newspaper Helsingin Sanomat.

A spokeswoman for the organisers said the spectators had been standing at the same distance from the road as in previous years.

A young woman was killed before last year's rally when she stepped in front of a car practising on the course.

Villeneuve wins pole in Belgian GP

SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS, Belgium (AFP) — Jacques Villeneuve drove his Williams-Renault to pole position for Sunday's Belgian Formula One Grand Prix here Saturday, in a rain-interrupted qualifying session.

The French-Canadian earned his second pole for the season after Melbourne by clocking 1 minute 50.574 seconds on the 6.974 kilometre circuit.

This year's Driver's Championship leader, Englishman Damon Hill also in a Williams-Renault, joins Villeneuve on the front row of the starting grid, while German world champion Michael Schumacher put his Ferrari into third.

The daunting Spa-Francorchamps circuit in the forests of Eastern Belgium is notorious for its fickle weather, and true to form, rain began to fall 40 minutes into the one-hour qualifying session.

Although competitive times were no longer competitive on the track, most of the drivers tested out their cars on the wet surface in the dying minutes of the session.

Hill has won here twice but finished second last year, out-classed by champion Michael Schumacher in treacherous conditions of intermittent rain, the German having started from 16th on the grid.

Villeneuve is the only driver who can still challenge Hill for the title in which Hill has been runner-up for the past two years.

The Canadian trails Hill by 17 points with four races, offering a maximum 40 points, still to run.

It is the Canadian's first Formula One race on the Spa-Francorchamps circuit.

Only 19 cars are lining up for the Belgian race, the Italian Forti team again absent after legal problems with its sponsor and Italian Giovanni Lavaggi failing to clock a time within the 107 per cent qualification cut-off in his Minardi-Ford.

The race is scheduled over 44 laps of the long track, half on public roads that have been closed for the weekend.

It is due to start at 2 p.m. (1200 GMT) Sunday and in fine weather, should last about 1 hour and 35 minutes. Rain could see the race last a gruelling two hours.

Hill leads the Driver's Championship on 79 points, followed by Villeneuve on 62, Frenchman Jean Alesi on 35 and Schumacher on 29.

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...louble triumph

Chang fails to reach Hamlet Cup semis

COMMACK, New York (AP) — Karol Kucera of Slovakia came up with the biggest victory of his career Friday night, a 6-4, 6-4 win over top-seeded Michael Chang in the quarterfinals of the Waldbaum Hamlet Cup.

Kucera, ranked 86th in the world, handed the third-ranked Chang his second loss in 18 matches on hard court this summer. The other was to Andre Agassi in the finals at Cincinnati earlier this month.

The loss gives Chang two days to recoup for the U.S. Open, where he is the second seed.

"I hope this won't affect me going into the Open," Chang said. "It's strange, I felt good in the warmup before the match. I hate to have a day like this just before the open."

With Chang eliminated, fifth-seeded Andrei Medvedev of the Ukraine became the only seed to reach the Hamlet Cup semifinals and he will play Kucera.

Adrian Voinea of Romania, who will be defending champion Pete Sampras' first-round opponent in the U.S. Open, also advanced to the semifinals with a 7-6 (7-4) 6-2 victory over Sweden's Thomas Johansson Friday.

Voinea's semifinal opponent will be Martin Damm of the Czech Republic, a 5-7, 6-2, 6-3 winner over Michael Joyce.

Chang double-faulted at an inopportune time to lose service in the fifth game and then fell behind 0-4 in the second set.

"I am very happy. I am yelling inside," Kucera, 22, said, "but I knew I could beat Michael. We played last year on clay in Rome and he beat me when we were 3-3 in the third set."

Chang erased three match points at 3-5, 0-40 with strong service but committed four errors as Kucera held for the match in the 10th game.

Medvedev overcame a strong challenge from Jonathon Stark for a 7-6 (7-4), 4-6, 6-3 victory.

Medvedev broke open a tight duel with Stark by reaching 3-0 with two service breaks in the final set.

"I'm very happy with the way I won," Medvedev said. "Stark played such a strong game to break my service at 5-4 in the second set after I was able to win a tiebreaker in the first set.

"But I was able to come right back and get a lead in the third set in the heat."

With the temperature reaching 90 but with very high humidity, Medvedev said, "you learn to play with discipline."

He beat Stark in 2 hours, 23 minutes. Stark, the lowest ranked player in the draw at 113th, had advanced to the quarters by beating Vincent Spadea in 2:31 Thursday.

The humid and uncomfortable conditions caused one of the ballboys, 15-year-old Jim Babcock of Huntington, N.Y., to pass out from "heat exhaustion," he was revived by emergency medical personnel.

Medvedev and Stark reached the first-set tiebreaker after an early service break exchange. Medvedev won the last three points, two with mini service breaks.

Stark outscored Medvedev 11-9 in service aces, but a double-fault in the ninth game of the third set erased his last chance after he had broken Medvedev in the fourth game.

Voinea reached leads of 4-1 and 6-3 in the first set tiebreaker, then doublefaulted but produced a service-winner to close out the set.

He broke Johansson's service in the fourth and 10th games of the second set,by changing tactics.

"It was so hot and humid, I decided to stay back and hit long. He never broke my service either," Voinea said.

Masterkova cashes in with second world record

BRUSSELS (R) — Russian double Olympic champion Svetlana Masterkova cashed in on her remarkable comeback to top-class athletics with her second world record inside 10 days at the Brussels Grand Prix Friday.

After breaking the world mark for the women's mile in Zurich last Wednesday, the Olympic 800 and 1,500 metres champion clocked two minutes 28.98 seconds to shave 0.36 seconds off the mark for the non-championship 1,000 metres.

The Russian ate up the ground in a swift last lap on Brussel's new track to improve on the previous best of 2:29.34 set by Mozambique's Maria Mutola in the same stadium in August last year.

Former 800 metres world champion Mutola pushed the Russian all the way and took second in 2:29.66. An exhausted Masterkova, who earned a bonus of $25,000 for the performance, paid tribute to her rival after the race.

"That really finished me," she said. "If it wasn't for Maria, I couldn't have done it. She pushed me...It was a fast track, a terrific atmosphere. The Mexican waves in the crowd gave me wings."

"In the last 400 metres I felt Mutola closing in and that drove me to the decisive extra effort."

Masterkova dominated the middle-distance races at the recent Atlanta games after returning to competition following a three-year maternity break.

In her first mile race at the richest meeting in Zurich, she slashed 3.05 seconds off the previous record, earning a bonus of $50,000 plus one kilo of gold.

After Friday's performance in front of a capacity 40,000 crowd who were all on their feet at the end of the race, the Russian will have earned well over $100,000 in less than a fortnight, taking her appearance money into account.

She celebrated by pointing at the clock in delight after she crossed the line.

Brussels organisers had laid a new track for the meeting comparable to the surface at the Atlanta games but put down on a softer surface. It was clearly fast.

Despite damp conditions after a downpour at the start of the meeting, there were some superb performances in both the sprint and distance events.

American Dennis Mitchell upstaged a trio of Olympic 100 metres champions. Kenyan Daniel Komen produced another historic 3,000 metres and American high hurdler Allen Johnson went within 0.01 seconds of the world record despite damp conditions.

Sporting his ubiquitous bright green outfit, Mitchell ran 10.03 seconds to take the scalp of Canada's reigning sprint champion Donovan Bailey, 1992 champion Linford Christie of Britain and American 1984 and 1988 champion Carl Lewis.

Mitchell, who just missed out on a medal in Atlanta with fourth place, also beat world and Olympic champion Bailey in Zurich last week.

"In terms of 100 metres, I'm still an amateur even though I'm 30. You can bet my best is still to come," he said. "I'm in the same shape physically now (as in Atlanta) but in other areas I'm much better."

Olympic champion Johnson defied the wet conditions to produce a brilliant 12.92 seconds in the 110 metres race, just one hundreth of a second outside the world record held by Britain's Colin Jackson.

Johnson ran the same time at the U.S. Olympic trials in Atlanta in June to become the second equal fastest hurdler of all time with American Roger Kingdom.

Jackson, the only man to have run faster, could not live with his speed, taking second in 13.24 seconds.

Komen failed to qualify for the Olympics but has run the second fastest 3,000 and 5,000 metres in history since the games. On Friday the 20-year-old clocked 7:25.87 for the shorter race, beating Algerian world record holder Noureddine Morceli in the process.

It was the third best time ever but Komen was not satisfied.

Olympic 1,500 metres champion Morceli, who has been suffering with injury since Atlanta, finished sixth in 7:36.81, well outside his world record of 7:25.11.

"The first kilometre was far too slow to beat the record," Komen said. "And Morceli wasn't really giving any help. I still think 5,000 is my best distance."

Seven athletes went into Friday's penultimate meeting of the golden four series with a chance of winning 20 one-kilogramme gold bars.

The prize, worth $250,000, is shared between athletes who clinch specific events at each of the meetings in Oslo, Zurich, Brussels and Berlin.

With next week's final meeting in the German capital remaining, only Jamaican Merlene Ottey, who finished third in the women's 100 metres, has dropped out of the race.

The athletes still in the hunt are Namibia's Frankie Fredericks (200 metres), Denmark's Wilson Kipketer (800), American Derrick Adkins (400 hurdles), Britain's Jonathan Edwards (triple jump), German Lars Riedel (discus) and Bulgarian high jumper Stefka Kostadinova.

Svetlana Masterkova celebrates after winning the women's 1,000 metres race of the 20th Van Damme Memorial in new world record at the King Baudouin stadium in Brussels. Masterkova won the race in a time of 2:28.98 minutes (Reuter photo)

Ferreira advances to Canadian Open semis

TORONTO (R) — Third-seeded Wayne Ferreira of South Africa won a 7-5 6-2 baseline battle with third-seeded Thomas Enqvist of Sweden in the quarterfinals of the $2 million Canadian Open Friday.

Ferreira, ranked 10th in the world, plays seventh-seeded Todd Martin of the United States in one of Saturday's semifinals. Martin defeated compatriot Alex O'Brien 6-4 6-4 Friday.

Ferreira, 24, has made the quarterfinals or better in all five events he's played since Wimbledon. "That's the kind of consistency I've been looking for," he said.

The other semifinal features Marcelo Rios of Chile, the fourth seed, against unseeded Todd Woodbridge of Australia.

Rios turned his game around after a one-sided first set to get by Australian Patrick Rafter 0-6 7-6(7-4) 6-1.

Woodbridge, ranked 43rd, handled the overpowering game of his countryman Mark Philippoussis 7-5 6-4 in the 76-minute match.

Ferreira took the first set from Enqvist with a service break in the 11th game. After losing the first game of the second set, Enqvist, ranked 14th, received treatment from the tournament trainer for a strained right shoulder.

"I played solid tennis," said Ferreira. "I had a lot of break-point chances in the first set and I knew that if I kept the pressure on I would eventually get a break."

Martin returned serve solidly to hand O'Brien his first loss in 10 matches. O'Brien entered the Canadian Open ranked a career-high 76th after winning the New Haven Tournament last week. But against the 13th ranked Martin he couldn't get his serve-and-volley game into gear.

"I think the best part of his game is that he puts so much pressure on your serve," O'Brien said. "When a guy is returning serve that well, you start to press a little and start to miss more first serves.

Rios had some inspired moments against Rafter, but none in the first set. For a while it looked like Rios, ranked 11th, might not win a game.

The 70th-ranked Aussie took a 4-0 lead after running 11 consecutive points. Rios didn't win a game until the second game of the second set.

"When the match started I was not moving a lot and I wasn't feeling very good on the court," Rios said. "After that I started holding my serve and I got a little bit of confidence and played well in the third set."

Rios went on a run of his own, winning the first five games of the third set. The 19-year-old Philippoussis, ranked 29th, had blown his early-round opponents off the court with his serve.

Sanchez Vicario-Novotna face off in Toshiba semifinals

CARLSBAD, California (R) — Top-seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario of Spain and doubles partner Jana Novotna will clash in the semifinals at the $450,000 Toshiba Classic.

Sanchez Vicario combined an effective serve, firing in seven aces, with her signature baseline game to ease past unseeded Katarina Studenikova of Slovakia 6-3 6-3 Friday.

Third-seed Novotna of the Czech Republic rallied past Sandrine Testud of France 2-6 7-6 (7-4) 6-3 in a two-hour, 35-minute match.

Earlier, fourth-seed Kimiko Date of Japan dismissed a lethargic Argentine Gabriela Sabatini, seeded fifth, 6-4 6-1 on the hard courts, setting up the other semifinal with defending champion Conchita Martinez of Spain.

"It was a good match for me and a good win," said Sanchez Vicario of the 73-minute victory. "Everything worked really well for me today. I was very happy with the way I played. I'm looking good and it's nice to be able to be in the semifinals."

The scrappy Spaniard needed a decisive service break in the final game to claim the opening set. A lone break in the eighth game of the second moved this year's French Open, Wimbledon and Olympic runnerup into her 10th semifinal of the year.

The second-ranked Spaniard now must focus on playing Novotna, with whom she has teamed to win 15 doubles titles. The Czech star publicly lashed out at Sanchez Vicario, saying she questioned too many line calls during a semifinal loss in the recent summer Olympic Games.

Novotnna didn't play smart in the opening set but managed to prevail against the world's No. 40 ranked player.

"I didn't expect Sandrine Testud to play so well," said Novotna, who improved to 4-0 against the French player. "I told her after the match she deserves all the credit because she played unbelievable. She ran down so many of my balls, and I happened to be a little more aggressive and a little luckier at the end to win the whole match. But I thought it was a really unbelievable match."

Date played a smart baseline match against the lethargic Argentine, who committed seven costly double faults, including four at break point.

"I've played her several times in the past, but I think if I had to compare her where she was in the top 10, she's making more unforced errors and looks like she wasn't able to put much pressure on me by her serve" said Date, who improved her career Mark to 3-4 against Sabatini. "I would say, she was not in good form today."

"I kind of just gave it to her," Sabatini said.

Sabatini said she hasn't been sleeping well and played despite a "terrible" headache.

"My game wasn't working very well today," Sabatini said. "I felt slow and tired. I wasn't reacting. I wasn't quick with my feet and it made me late with my shots."

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Yemen exiles want referendum on south

DUBAI (AFP) — Former Yemeni Vice President Ali Salem Al Beid on Saturday called for a referendum on self-determination for southern Yemen as a former southern official challenged a lawsuit against 15 separatist leaders.

The south, where Mr. Beid had proclaimed the short-lived Democratic Republic of Yemen (DRY) during the May-July 1994 civil war, was defeated by the north.

In a statement published by the London-based Arabic dai-ly Al Hayat, a "source close to Beid" said that "the goal of the legislative elections planned for April is to legitimise the occupation of the south" of Yemen by northern troops.

Mr. Beid, former secretary general of the south's Yemen Socialist Party, called for "a referendum to be held so the people of the south of Yemen can determine their own future." In July, the former vice president, who took refuge in Oman after the civil war, told Al Hayat that he still supported secession by the south and demanded a referendum be held under Arab and international supervision.

In another statement run by Al Hayat, DRY Vice-President Abdul Rahman Al Jiffri, who moves between Egypt, Britain and Saudi Arabia, warned against "a renewal of the conflict and the 'Somaliasation' of Yemen if the government continues to reject a national reconciliation."

Mr. Jiffri, who founded the national opposition front after he left Yemen, proposed that the charges against the 15 separatist leaders be resolved through arbitration by "Yemeni religious figures on the basis of Islamic law," "impartial Yemeni figures," "impartial men of law." Arab or international leaders or "a dialogue committee which drew up the reconciliation agreement signed in February 1994 in Amman by northern and southern Yemeni leaders, under the sponsorship of King Hussein.

Syria is committed to peace in return for land, Assad tells Japanese minister

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad said on Saturday that he was still committed to making peace with Israel on the basis of the land-for-peace principle.

Mr. Assad's remarks on peace, his first after Syria and Israel last week accused each other of preparing for war, were made during talks with Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda, presidential spokesman Joubran Kourieh said.

"President Assad said that Syria was still committed to the peace process on the basis of the international legitimacy, (U.N.) resolutions and the land-for-peace principle," Mr. Kourieh said.

In his talks in Damascus, Mr. Ikeda explained to Syrian leaders his country's desire to play a more important political and economic role in the Middle East, where Western powers have the edge.

Mr. Ikeda met for two hours with President Assad. The Japanese foreign minister said afterwards that the meeting focused on the stalled Middle East peace process and regional economy.

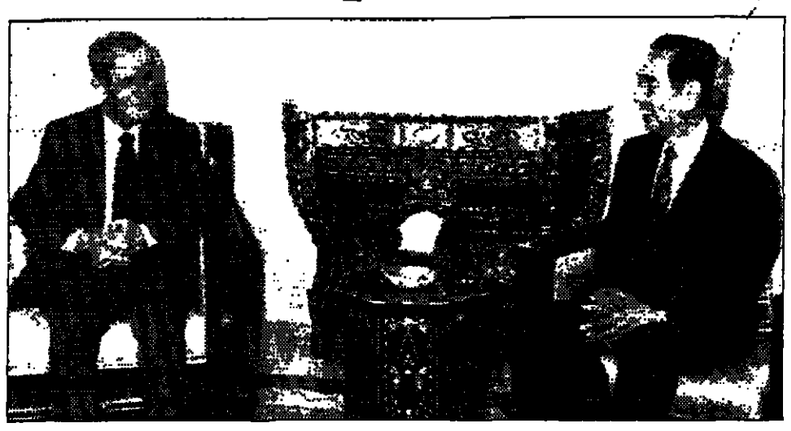
He said his visit was "an important step on the way of expanding and maintaining" relations with Syria and other countries in the region.

Earlier Saturday, Mr. Ikeda signed a loan agreement that provides Syria with $9.7 million to help finance an electricity plant.

Japan has in recent years emerged as a major financial backer of Syria. In addition to Saturday's agreement, Tokyo has since 1990 extended $766 million in soft loans to Syria.

Mr. Ikeda flew to Jordan Saturday. He will later visit Israel

(Continued on page 7)



Syrian Presiden t Hafez Al Assad on Saturday holds talks with Japanese Foreign Minister Yukihiko Ikeda (Reuters photo)

Palestinian journalists strike after Arafat guard beats camera crew

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — One of Yasser Arafat's personal security guards beat two journalists Saturday and the Palestinian Journalists Association called for a one-day boycott of Mr. Arafat's government to protest the incident.

A Palestinian Television crew was beaten by Major Jazar Al Joul, a commander in the elite Force 17 unit in charge of security at Mr. Arafat's office, shortly after they arrived to cover a weekly cabinet meeting, the journalists association said.

An official in Mr. Arafat's office, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Maj. Joul had been arrested and that police were investigating the incident.

"We went to the leader of the presidential guards and informed them that we condemn this and are officially on strike today," Zacharya Al Talmas, head of the journalists association, told the Associated Press.

Both journalists, who work for the Reuters news agency were in fine condition later Saturday, Mr. Talmas said.

Reuters' Jerusalem bureau refused to comment on the incident or allow the camera crew to be interviewed.

Mr. Talmas said Maj. Joul prevented the journalists from entering Mr. Arafat's office and then beat them when the journalists complained. It was not immediately clear why the camera crew was denied entrance to the office.

Mr. Talmas said that the two journalists went directly to the journalists association to report the incident. The association then announced to its Gaza membership that a one-day boycott of coverage of Mr. Arafat's government was to be observed as a protest against the beating.

The Palestinian Journa-ists Association in Gaza said in a statement: "The syndicate is boycotting the meeting at Mr. Arafat's office because of this attack which reflects an insult to the dignity of Palestinian journalists.

"The syndicate sent messages to the cabinet and ministry of information and to the commander of Force 17 and to Mr. Arafat's media adviser demanding they carry out the civil procedures to avoid repetition of such attacks on journalists." Arafat adviser Nabil Abu Rdainah told Reuters in reaction: "I will investigate the matter and I will take the suitable steps to solve such problems."

Human rights groups have cited intimidation of journalists as part of a series of abuses under the Palestinian National Authority since it began taking control of parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1994 in an interim peace deal with Israel.

Last week, the Palestinian cabinet decided to set up guidelines that would curtail the powers of security forces and probe those suspected of financial and moral corruption.

The decisions were based on the recommendations of a ministerial committee that probed the death of an inmate by torture in a Nablus prison in the West Bank and a demonstrator during a riot in the West Bank town of Tulkarem.

Four months ago, Palestinian journalists held a similar strike during a meeting of the Palestinian legislative council to protest treatment of the press.

Several newspapers have been closed temporarily or banned for criticising the authority and journalists and editors have been detained or received warnings by security branches. But Mr. Talmas said the situation is improving.

"Despite exceptions such as this, conditions for the press are better today than they were last year," he said.

Kinkel to study charges linking murders to Iran

BONN (R) — Germany's Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, facing opposition demands to break off ties with Iran, said on Saturday he would study evidence that Tehran ordered the killing of Iranian dissidents on German soil before acting.

Former Iranian President Abolhassan Bani Sadr told a German court trying five men for the 1992 restaurant murder of three Iranian Kurds and their translator that the orders for the murder came from top Iranian officials (see page 2).

In an interview with a Berlin radio station Mr. Kinkel, one of the main proponents of Bonn's much-criticised policy of openness towards Iran, said he planned to study the court transcripts before drawing conclusions.

Opposition Social Democrat parliamentarian Wilfried Penner urged the government to break off diplomatic ties with Iran immediately in the light of the Berlin murder trial.

In an interview with a German regional radio station Mr. Penner said that Bonn should act quickly in case it emerged from the trial that Tehran really had ordered the machinegun killings at a Berlin restaurant.

Mr. Bani Sadr told a heavily-fortified Berlin court on Thursday and Friday that Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and top Iranian government ministers ordered the deaths with President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's blessing.

"Of course we must evaluate what Mr. Bani Sadr said in the trial. And of course this is something which must be of significance to the type of relations we have with Iran," Mr. Kinkel said.

"I don't want to draw any hasty conclusions or make premature judgements in any form whatsoever, above all because I cannot and do not want to interfere in the trial," he said.

"I prefer to keep to the facts," said Mr. Kinkel, whose controversial policy of "critical dialogue" with Iran has drawn severe criticism particularly from Washington.

Tehran has consistently denied all involvement in the Berlin assassinations. But German authorities issued an arrest warrant in March for Iran's Intelligence Minister Ali Fallahiyan in connection with the killings.

It is not the first time Bonn's policy towards Iran has caused embarrassment for Foreign Minister Kinkel.

Last year he was forced to cancel an Islamic conference in Bonn after the German parliament voted to bar Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati following his comments welcoming Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination in November.

Defence rests case in New York terror trial

Jury deliberations begin this week

NEW YORK (AP) — The defence has rested in the trial of three Middle East militants charged with scheming to blow up a dozen U.S. jetliners over Asia. The jury could begin deliberating by the end of this week.

Federal prosecutors spent 12 weeks presenting their case, summoning 47 witnesses and introducing more than 1,000 exhibits into evidence.

By contrast, the defence wrapped up in four days after calling just five witnesses and introducing about 35 exhibits. None of the defendants testified in the trial. They rested their case on Friday.

One defendant, Wali Khan Amin Shah, called no one to the stand. His lawyer, David Greenfield, suggested government officials in the Philippines — where prosecutors say the plot was centred — blocked access to potential witnesses.

The defendants face up to life in prison if convicted on conspiracy charges.

Prosecutors say Ramzi Yousef, aided by Shah and Abdul Hakim Murad, planned to conceal bombs on a dozen planes headed for New York, Los Angeles and other U.S. cities in January 1995 in a two-day terror spree intended to sway American support for Israel.

The attacks were never carried out, but a bomb allegedly was smuggled aboard a Philippines airlines jet in December 1994 as a practice run and exploded, killing a Japanese passenger and wounding 10 others.

The final witness was a neuropsychiatrist who had examined Murad, and generally supported his claim he was tortured while in custody in the Philippines. Murad's attorney, Clover Barrett, has claimed his client made incriminating statements to U.S. authorities to avoid being returned to the Philippines.

Yousef, who acted as his own attorney, will be tried later this year as the alleged mastermind of the 1993 World Trade Centre bombing, which killed six people and injured more than 1,000 others. Four other men already have been convicted and sentenced to 240 years in prison each in that attack.

No ceasefire in northern Iraq, rebel groups report

ERBIL (Agencies) — Rival Kurdish groups in northern Iraq were involved in new fighting on Saturday, leaders from both sides said while denying they had agreed to a U.S.-sponsored ceasefire.

Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) forces fought sporadic battles late Friday and Sa-urday around Rawandiz, northeast of the main Iraqi Kurdistan town of Erbil, the groups said without giving details of casualties.

"The fighting is still going on even now, a ceasefire has not been established," said Sami Abdul Rahman, a member of the KDP leadership based in Erbil.

Kamal Fuad, of the PUK leadershi, added: "There have been clashes throughout today in the Rawandiz area. We have agreed to start negotiations, but there is no ceasefire."

U.S. State Department Spokesman Glyn Davies said Friday that both PUK leader Jalal Talabani and KDP counterpart Massud Barzani agreed to a truce after talks with U.S. officials.

"The two leaders have agreed to cease the fighting (and) return their forces to the positions held before the current fighting began on Saturday," he said in a statement.

Mr. Abdul Rahman said KDP leaders had spoken to U.S. officials by telephone, but that his group would not agree to a truce until Washington condemned the PUK for starting the latest round of fighting, and Iran for giving military support to the PUK.

"We cannot confirm a ceasefire because we have those conditions," he added.

Mr. Fuad also confirmed contact between U.S. and PUK officials, and said: "We are prepared to have a meeting between the two leaders and to start negotiations. But first we must have a ceasefire."

The week-long clashes between the rival groups, which both sides say have claimed more than 100 casualties, are the worst since a U.S.-brokered truce in September last year.

The two factions have jointly controlled northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad since the allied forces imposed a no-fly zone on the region after the Gulf war in 1991.

The PUK accuses the KDP of collaborating with Iraqi President Saddam Hu-ssein, while the KDP says Iran actively supports the PUK. Each denies the other's claims.

The KDP and the PUK both won 50 per cent of the parliamentary seats in 1992 elections, but they fell out in 1994 over distribution of tax revenue and power-sharing.

The conflict has so far claimed an estimated 2,200 lives. Iraq meanwhile called on the Kurdish factions to shake off U.S. intervention in their affairs.

"The Kurdish people realise they are being used in dirty regional and global game, which is why they are ready today ... to push for their salvation by developing their autonomy within the framework of a strong Iraq," said the official Iraqi daily Al Jumhuriya.

The paper said: "The United States, Britain and the Zionists want to cause civil war in Iraq, Turkey and Iran, just as they want to cause war between these countries."

"The abnormal situation in the north of Iraq, which has become a haven for armed groups, mercenaries and agents, has serious consequences for the stability of countries in the region, as well as their security and unity," said Al Jumhuriya.

The Iranian news agency IRNA reported the PUK accused Iraqi government forces of killing two civilians in shelling in northern Iraq.

IRNA said it was monitoring a report from a radio station affiliated to the PUK.

NATO to discuss new peace force for Bosnia — Ruehe

BONN (AFP) — North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) will next year set up a new, smaller, but powerful military force of some 20,000 to continue maintaining peace in Bosnia, German Defence Minister Volker Ruehe said in an interview made public on Saturday.

It is the first time a minister from a NATO member country has publicly acknowledged that a new operation will be implemented after the withdrawal of the NATO-led Implementation Force (IFOR) at the end of the year.

NATO will begin talks next month on a "totally new and different" mandate for a peace-keeping force in Bosnia, Mr. Ruehe said in an interview with a Sunday newspaper.

He said NATO defence ministers would begin discussions on the subject at their meeting on Sept. 25 and 26 in Bergen, Norway.

"We must prevent war and massacres starting all over again," Mr. Ruehe said, emphasising that this goal could be achieved "with far fewer troops in number (than IFOR) but with more muscle."

The force would be up to 20,000-strong, compared with the 60,000 IFOR troops currently based in the former Yugoslav republic, and should be able to count on "strong external support, in particular from air forces," Mr. Ruehe said.

Until now, NATO member states refused to comment on post-IFOR Bosnia, for fear it could have an effect on elections to be held in Bosnia on Sept. 14.

One of the main questions to be resolved is to what extent the United States, which is embroiled in campaigning for its own presidential elections, will take part in the new force.

Mr. Ruehe's statement follows information leaked in July by unofficial sources.

A NATO official, who requested to remain anonymous, then told AFP that maintaining a multinational military presence in Bosnia in 1997 was "already decided."

However, like Germany, other NATO states are believed to consider that for future peacekeeping, a reduced force should suffice, backed up by rapid reaction forces held in reserve and considerable air support.

In the same interview, Mr. Ruehe argued that the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland would belong to NATO as early as 1999.

"I am persuaded that the NATO summit in the first half of next year will decide to begin negotiations on membership, and more particularly, that of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary," he said.

Girl bleeds to death during circumcision procedure in Egypt

CAIRO (AP) — A 14-year-old Egyptian girl bled to death on Saturday during a female circumcision operation, the second child to die from the procedure in two months, police officials said.

They said the doctor who performed the surgery was being sought. His name was not given.

The victim was identified as Amina Abdul Hamid Abu Elah. She died during the surgery in the doctor's clinic in the village of Ashfin in Qalyubia province just north of Cairo, police said.

Last month, an 11-year-old girl bled to death after a botched circumcision performed by a barber in another village north of Cairo.

In April, a barber in a village near Assiut in southern Egypt was sentenced to a year in prison for causing permanent damage to a nine-year-old girl during a circumcision operation.

The procedure can involve cutting away the tip of the clitoris or removing all exterior genitals.

Many Egyptians follow the tradition blindly, thinking the operation curbs a girl's sexual appetite or enhances cleanliness. Others believe it is ordained by Islam. Muslim scholars reject this. Some Egyptian Christians follow the practice, too.

There is no law that specifically outlaws female circumcision in Egypt, but the government has taken steps to try to stop it.

Barbers and midwives, who are the traditional practitioners, face prosecution if caught on charges of performing surgery without a medical licence.

Last month Health Minister Ismail Sallam, under pressure from women's and human rights groups, banned all registered doctors, nurses and health care workers from performing circumcisions.

Earlier, the ministry had banned the procedure in state-run hospitals, and Mr. Sallam in July expanded the prohibition to include private clinics as well. Mr. Sallam said violators faced "severe punishment," but did not specify what the penalties would be.

Police officials on Saturday said Abu Elah was taken by her father, an electrical repairman, to have the circumcision performed.

The officials said the doctor has fled the village and that an arrest warrant has been issued. They spoke on condition they not be identified by name.

Despite the dangers to health, an estimated 70 per cent to 90 per cent of girls in Egypt are circumcised before puberty.

Wife set ablaze

A villager in southern Egypt doused his wife with kerosene and set her afire after an argument in which she spoke English to him instead of Arabic, police officials said Saturday.

The woman, identified as Najah Ahmad Awyeda, 35, died from severe burns in a hospital near the southern town of Luxor, the officials said. They said the incident occurred earlier in the week but did not have the specific date.

The police officials said the husband, Abdul Ati Mohammad, 40, was arrested and charged in his wife's death.

Mohammed told interrogators that during an argument, his wife insisted on speaking to him in English, a language he cannot understand, and refused to talk in their native Arabic, according to police officials.

The officials said the wife had recently begun studying the English language because she works in a shop dealing with foreign tourists. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity.

COLUMN 8

'U.S. vegetarian bus driver's rights violated'

LOS ANGELES (R) — A vegetarian bus driver's civil rights were violated by a municipal bus company that fired him for refusing to hand out free hamburger coupons, a federal agency has ruled. "This is a wonderful day for me and vegetarians everywhere because we are being taken seriously," Bruce Anderson said in a statement Friday. California's Orange County Transit Authority dismissed Mr. Anderson in June after he chose not to give passengers coupons from a fast-food chain that runs ads featuring sandwiches oozing sauce.

Oldest Titanic survivor sets sail for site

NEW YORK (R) — At age 99, Edith Haisman has seen plenty and lived through a lot. But the oldest living survivor of the Titanic disaster cannot bring herself to look over the side of a ship, even 84 years after the tragedy. Ms. Haisman was packed and ready to set sail on board a cruise ship to visit the site of the sunken ship and witness efforts to pull a giant slab of its hull from the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean.

The fragile great-great-grandmother, who travels in a wheelchair and is accompanied on her journey by daughter Dorothy Kendle, planned to throw a wreath into the ocean in honour of her father, one of 1,500 people who died in the April 14, 1912, tragedy. Ms. Heisman and two other survivors, 88-year-old Michel Navratil, a retired professor from France, and Eleanor Shuman, an 86-year-old Illinois resident, are the guests of honour.

Poland's dashing cavalry may ride again

WARSAW (R) — Poland's famous cavalry is set to ride again, if a group of enthusiasts who met in Warsaw has its way. They formed an association which aims to train and equip a cavalry squadron and then offer it to the Defence Ministry for use on ceremonial occasions, Polish News Agency (PAP) said. Deputy Prime Minister Roman Jagielinski was elected president. The association also includes other parliamentary deputies from his co-ruling Peasant Party, army officers and cavalry veterans as well as amateur riders. Poland's dashing ulans last won renown by holding out for a month against an invasion by mechanised Nazi German forces and then by Soviet troops in 1939.

Couple found alive on beach after air crash

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (R) — A Canadian couple presumed to have died in a plane crash three days ago were found alive Friday almost by chance on a nearby beach, police said. Brian and Sheila Johnson were piloting a light plane on a sightseeing flight Tuesday on the remote west coast of Vancouver Island when they crashed into a lake. Rescue crews later found their identification floating among the wreckage and gave up the search, presuming they had died. A Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer flew to the site at Gaultheria Lake Friday with a coroner and divers to compile a final report on the incident. As he circled his helicopter to take pictures of the crash site, he spotted the pair on a beach about a mile away.